Bible. N.T. I. Epistle of S. John. English.

¶ The Comentaries of M. Jhon Caluin vpon the first Epistle of Sainct Jhon, and vpon the Epistle of Jude: wherein accordyng to the truthe of the woordes of the holie Ghost, he most excellently openeth and cleareth the poinct of true iustification with GOD, and sanctification by the Spirit of Christ, by the effects that he bryngeth forthe in the regeneration. Translated into Englishe by W.H.

Psal. 129. 5.
Thei that hate Syon, shalbe all ashamed and turned backward.

Prou 19.14.
House and riches are the inheritaunce of the Fathers: but a prudent wife commeth of the Lorde.

Psal. 32. 11.
Be glad ye righteous, and reioyce in the Lorde, and bee ioyfull all ye that are true of harte.

¶ Imprinted at London by Jhon Kyngstone, for Jhon Harrison the yonger.

[ca. 1580]

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To the Worshipfull my very good freend Maister William Swan of Wye in Kent, and to the right Vertuous and Christian Gentlewoman Mistresse Amy Swan his Wife, with all those that in the truth of a single hart loue the Lord Jesus, in that Congregation, W. H. wisheth plentie of those blessynges whiche haue promises of this life and the life to come.

1. Tim. 4. 8.

IN the often consideration (right deare in the Lord) of the righteous a iudgemẽt of GOD, against all the sonnes of men, with the infinite ouerflowinges of all b guiltinesse before hym, the many assaultes of c Sathan, and daungerous inticements of our own d harts into the waie of euill, the e fearcenesse of the Lordes wrathe for sinne, and our owne vtter f inabilitie to stande in his sight, whiche causeth that the hartes of many g righteous

a Gen. 2. 17. Rom. 5. 12.

b Gen. 8. 21. Esa. 64. 6.

c Gen. 3. 1. 1. Cro. 21. 1.

d Rom. 8. 13.

e Deut. 32. 18. 19. 20. 21. Rom. 6. 23.

f 1. Sam. 2. 25.

g Psal.6.1.2.3.4.5. Math.24.46. *in the feelyng of their owne wants doe euen faint before the anger of the Lorde: hath in the direction of Gods Spirite, giuen an hartie desire to be assured of the waie of safetie, with what soeuer belongeth to the right application and continuaunce of the same. Wherein as the Lorde hath made knowne*

h Ieremy.32.3. Ihon.3.16. Rom.5.8. Gala.2.21. Ephe.3.19.5.2. *the riches of his owne free h loue towardes his, the head and alone fountaine of all eternall saftie vnto his elect, so is it also plaine that by no other way or meane we haue attained vnto the free gift of grace, and full reconcilement with the Lorde, then by the*

i Rom.8.3. 1. Tim.3.16. k Math.3.17. Gala.5.17. Ephe.28. Phil.1.6.2.13.2 Thes.2.17. Tit.17.14. Heb.13.21. *mediation of the i sonne of God in our owne flesh. For all the counsell, k will, wisedome, and power of the sonnes of men, as in them selues thei are moste vncleane, so must they flie before the face of the Lord and neuer be able to pleade innocencie for his Saincte s. Whiche reconcilement as (albeit in it self it is alsufficient for all the sonnes of men) it is*

l Rom 9.11.11. 5.11.7. m Act.13.39.26 18. Rom.3 21.24. 25.2[9].4.5 11.24. Phil 3.9. Heb.11.14. *onely effectuall to the Lordes l elect, who in the power of an effectuall m faithe alone receiue the fauour of the Lorde with application of the promises of his grace: so in the like power vnto hymself, alwaies rulyng where he is had, prouidyng cheefly for the*

honor

n honor of his name With a ioyned care for the good of his Churche, o and Woorking a newneſſe of the Whole p man, doeth onely ſeale vnto the ſoules of the Saincte of God the aſſuraunce of their good eſtate With the Lord. For q whoſoeuer by an effectuall callyng is grafted into the Sonne of God, and made a member of that bodie Whereof Ieſus Chriſt is the head, is one With hym in the r fellowſhippe of all the bleſſynges of the Lorde. And albeit thei are onely infinite in hym, Who hath receiued aboue his fellowes, yet according to the meaſure of the diſpenſation of his grace, thei are freely giuen vnto all his elect, and are aſſured vnto them by a moſt effectuall Witneſſe, euen the Spirite of adoption and grace, by whō he dwelleth in thoſe that bee his, Who as he is not Without his effect, ſo in a moſte liuely and quickning power he bothe applieth and ſealeth vp. And as he hath appeared for vs a s King a t Prieſt and a v Prophet, ſo the great kindneſſe of the Lord, is ſeuerally applied according to the ſame. As in the firſt, he hath vtterly ſpoiled and laied Waſte the power of all the enemies of his Church, and iuſtly taken the Kingdome vnto hymſelf,

n Pſal. 115.
1. Ihon. 17. 4.
Act. 3. 13.
1. Cor. 6. 20.
o Exo. 29. 45.
Leuit. 26. 12.
Eſa. 43. 2.
Math. 9. 36. 21. 41.
p Ihon. 3. 3.
2. Cor. 5. 17.
q Rom. 8. 28. 29 30. 9. 24.
1. Cor. 1. 9. 24.
r Math. 12. 50.
Ihon. 20. 7.
Rom. 8. 29.
Heb. 2. 11. 12.

s 1. Sam. 2.
Pſal. 2. 6.
Eſa. 3. 6. 7.
Ieremy. 23. 5. 6.
Ez. 34. 24.
t Heb 4. 14. 8. 6.
Heb. 5. 6. 7. 11.
v Deut 18. 8.
Act 3. 11. 22.
1. Cor. 1 30.
Collo. 2. 3.
Iere. 23. 5 25. 5.
Ezec. 21 26.
Zach. 9. 9.

a Psal.45.6. the Scepter whereof shal a neuer fade or de-
caie, so we being cleared of all daunger, and
freed from the perill of all our foes, are in all
care & conscience, to confesse him our Lord
alone, and as true subiects of so good a King,
to holde our selues against Sathan and men,
vnto the pure obedience of his wil. Againe,
Psal.110.5. as he is the onely true Priest, who is sanctified
Zach.6.13. of God to offer vnto hym a most sweete
Heb.2.17. Sacrifice to reconcile vs vnto hymself, and
as by his alone execution of this office, and
offeryng of hymself, we haue by hym a sure
peace and free entrance into the presentes of
the Lorde, as by hym all enmitie is doen a-
waie, and there remaineth inaccomptable
peace and fauour for euermore, so we are most
strongly to cast out of sight the sleightes of
Sathan and all the deuises of men, as moste
vncleane filthinesse for euer, and not to set
our selues, or admit others of what sorte soe-
uer, to stande for vs in this ductie, to spoyle
vs of assured safetie, and the Lorde Iesus of
this honour, that he alone and none but he
is the Priest of his Churche, and hath fully
and alsufficiently performed whatsoeuer ap-
pertaineth to their peace for euermore.

And as he alone among all the Prophets

of

of the Lorde, hath infinitly opened the will of God, and as in him is al fulneſſe of diuine wiſedome, to reueale and make knowne the will of God vnto his Churche, and as what ſoeuer he diſcloſeth vnto his Saincte, hath a ſounde warrant to be the will of the moſt higheſt, and ought to hold vs in the awe of the ſame: ſo he alone hath this peculier vnto hymſelf, to bee the moſte excellent Prophet and Apoſtle of his Churche, and that none muſt be vnto vs in this place but he alone, and whatſoeuer doth not proceede from him muſt not be held of power to binde the conſciences of men. Eſa.40.11.61.1. Deut.18.15. Ihon.10.11. 2.Cor.2.12.

In all whiche as the Lorde Ieſus hath troden the Winepreſſe alone, and carried captiue for euermore, what ſoeuer might withſtande the ſaluation of his, and by his Spirite directed vs into the light and vſe of the ſame: ſo in the like power of the ſame Spirite he ſealeth vnto the conſciences of men, the ſounde warrant of the infinite fauour of GOD in the righteouſneſſe of his Sonne, to the free and ſure enioiyng of al the reſt. And as who ſo hath not the Spirite of Chriſt is none of his, whereby is ſeuered the ſtates of men, ſo the ſame Spirite is diſcer- 2.Cor.1.24. 1.Tim.4.1. Eſa.63.3. Rom.8.9. Gala.5.22.23.

ned by his effectes, whiche becauſe in this caſe theiare of two ſortes, it ſhall be profitable in a worde to weigh them a parte, that in the effectuall triall of the ſame, the children of God maie in a ſounde experience of the power of Chriſt in their owne ſoules, bee chearcd vnto conſtancie in euery good duetie againſt Sathan and men: and the vaine diſſemblers, Herctiques, tyme ſeruers, Epicures, and carnall Goſpellers, with the like, who ſwarme euery where, maie (if thei had eyes to ſee) perceiue their iuſt cauſe to returne, and to humble their ſoules vnto the obedience of the Lorde.

The firſt effecte therefore is an inwarde witneſſe vnto the ſoule of the infinite loue and free grace of God by faith in the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, and whereby is giuen boldneſſe with an aſſured truſt to reſt vpon hym in euery diſtreſſe, and to repaire vnto hym with callyng vpon his name. As it is

Rom.8.16.

Gala.4.6.

written: Becauſe ye are Sonnes, God hath ſent the Spirit of his Sonne into your hartes, criyng Abba, Father. Whiche although for a tyme it ſeeme to bee hid, and beyng as it were raked vnder the aſhes of our owne corruption, yet becauſe it is a pledge of the

loue

loue of God, which is not for a daie: but perpetuall in his Sonne (For whom he loueth, he loueth them to the ende) *and working in vs an effectuall callyng, which with God is without repentaunce, it sealeth vnto vs the truthe of a sure election, and so consequently, that there is no feare of fallyng awaie, because we rest not on any strength of our owne: but vpon the resolute cõtinuance of the loue of God, and the infinite truth of his worde and grace.* Ihon.13.1. Rom.11.29. Rom.8.30.

The other effect is more apparãtly seen. For by faith he doeth purifie the hart, causeth a true hatred and continual dying vnto sinne, and daiely quickeneth vnto the obedience of the Lorde, chaungeth the naturall disposition of the whole soule and body, and frameth it to the will of God, and worketh a feruent loue aboue all thynges vnto the Lord, and to those that be his, with cõtinuall callyng vpon his name according to his wil. And these effectes as thei are peculier to the Spirite of Christ, and haue not been, in a right purpose (namely for the glorie of God and the good of his) in any other then in the Sainctes of God, so in whom soeuer these effectes are founde, though with Acts.15.9. Rom.6.4. Rom.6.5.6.7.8 Psal.69.9.

Who so hath the fruites of the Spirite, hath the Spirite. 2. Pet. 1. 10.

much weakeneſſe, ſo it be in truth and without hypocriſie, it ſhall euer bee founde to bee moſt true, that where is the effectes, there is the cauſe to whom thei belong. So that by this right diſcernyng of the fruites of the Spirite of the Lorde Ieſus, and the hauyng of the ſame, we maie truely gather that we haue hymſelf, ſo as is meant in the worde of God, and ſo are ſurely grafted into Chriſt, and maie aſſure our hartes before him both for our ſelues and others, what ſoeuer other waies our feare and feelyng be for the tyme. For if at ſometymes wee maie finde that in ſome meaſure wee haue had theſe effectes, the true fruites of a liuely faithe, and ſo the aſſuraunces of our election and ſaluation by Chriſt, then is there no iuſt cauſe of any feare, if wee mourne vnto the repoſſeſſing of our peace againe, becauſe the giftes and callynges of God are without repentance. Rom. 11. 29. And if it bee obiected that wee haue felt the fauour of the Lorde, but now it is gone, and cleane tourned awaie, as that obiection is moſt vntrue, ſo to thinke on that faſhion, is to ſuppoſe an impoſſible thyng. For God neuer chaungeth his owne purpoſe, but what ſoeuer he hath purpoſed ſhall ſtand, and his 2. Tim. 2. 19.

counſell

counſell ſhall take effect, whatſoeuer lets be againſt it. Wherevpon we maie rightly gather, that who ſoeuer hath a certaine teſtimonie of his faithe and ſaluation in all his life, maie be aſſured that it is there ſtil: and ſhall bee vnto the ende, although for a tyme thei feele it not, nor perceiue the working of it. For it doeth not followe, that a little child hath no reaſonable ſoule, becauſe he hath not the vſe of it, or that the Trees be dead in Winter, becauſe thei beare no fruite, or that there is no Fire, becauſe there is no flame.

Againe, the Lorde Ieſus Chriſt killeth in vs, that is, beginneth to kil in vs the whole bodie of ſinne, and maketh all thinges newe concernyng the qualitie thereof, ſo that our vnderſtandyng and iudgement is lightened and gouerned, that it beginneth to approue of thoſe good thynges which before it miſliked, our Will alſo is cleanſed to the hatred of ſinne, and deſire of thoſe thynges that be good, and our affection beginne to flie and eſchewe what is forbidden, and to embrace and followe that Whiche is commended of the Lorde. The Whiche inWarde poWer of the Spirite of Chriſt, if wee feele in effect, and

Rom. 8. 10.
2. Cor. 5. 17.
Reue. 21. 5.

and working in our owne soule, or see the care it leadeth others vnto: the conclusion is infallible and plaine, that wee haue faith, and so consequently Iesus Christ & eternall life.

But it is obiected, how can there be assuraunce of the vndoubted fauour of the Lorde, and of saluation, seeyng all men are sinners: not onely in that euery man is corrupted by nature, but that the corrupt nature of man doth daily bryng forth effectes accordyng to the same, mouynges, prouocations, consentynges, and actions contrarie to the will of God? yea seing all doe sinne? The aunswere is easie, that albeit euery one hath continually in hym those thynges that bee in them selues infinitely offensiue before the Lorde, yet the distaunce is not so much betweene heauen and earth, as the difference is great, betweene sinner and sinner, that is, betweene hym in whom sinne raigneth, and hym in whom sinne is. Of the first: the Apostle commaundeth such as feare God, that

Rom.6.12. *sinne doe not raigne in them, that is, haue power to leade thē with delight in the waie of euill. And of the other he saieth by his owne example:* That that I would not do,

Rom.7.15.17. that

that I doe: yet not I, but ſinne that dwelleth in me. *Where he meaneth by ſinne, the remnaunces of corruption whiche yet were ſinne, albeit he laboured againſt it, and was ſo farre from taking delight therein, that he euen groned vnder the burden thereof, ſaiyng.* O wretched man that I am, who ſhal deliuer me from this bodie of death? Rom.7.24.

But who ſeeth not, that fewe there are, who ſtriue to giue obediēce vnto the Lord, and to ſhew forth the effectual cognizaunce and badge whoſe people thei be, by true regeneration, and ſincere loue to the brethren? Infinite in deede are the thouſandes of men, who beare an outward face to the Goſpell of Chriſt, that yet doe wholly prophane themſelues in the obedience of ſinne, not knowyng, or not regardyng, that iuſtification, and ſanctification are inſeperable companions, who can not bee ſondred or put aparte. Yet the olde complaint of the Prophet is in vſe at this daie, that men ſeeme to ſaie in their hartes: Wee haue made a couenaunt with death, and with hell are wee at a greement, though a ſcourge run ouer, and paſſe through, it ſhall not come at vs: for we haue made falſhood our refuge Eſa.28.15. 2.Cor 5.17.

ruge, and vnder vanitie are we hidd.

Moiſes commaunded the Iſraelites care-
Deut. 29. 18. 19. 20. *fully to auoide the roote of bitterneſſe, and*
Heb. 12. 15. *ſheweth what it is and the daunger there-*
of, that is, an harte hardened at the iudge-
mentes of the Lorde, and ſaiyng: Tuſhe I
ſhall haue peace although I walke accor-
ding to the ſtubbornneſſe of myne owne
harte. The Lorde ſaieth Moiſes will not
be merciſull to ſuche a ſoule. &c.

And who maie not ſee the many, yea in-
finite thouſandes of ſuche as haue in their
profeſſion ſucceeded Eſawe, as prophane as
Heb. 12. 16. *he, who contemned and ſolde his birthright*
for one meſſe of meate, but thei thinke thei
ſhall ſafely retourne in conuenient tyme, yet
thei are greatly deceiued: Eſawe thought
Gen. 25. 32. *not his birthright worth a ſtrawe if he pe-*
riſhed with hunger, that is, except it might
ſerue hym in this life. Theſe contemne the
truth of Gods word, the honor of his name,
and care of true obedience vnto his will, in
regarde of their pleaſure or profite the leaſt
Heb. 12. 17. *that maie. Eſawe founde no place to repen-*
taunce, although he ſought the bleſſing with
teares: and who can aſſure them that their
portion wil not be as his. For howſoeuer thei

ent-

outwardly pretende to agree with vs in one and the same truthe of God, yet we continually see to our intollerable greefe, how in the practize of their life, thei runne headlong to all prophanneſſe, caſt the glorious power of the worde of God (whiche ſhould continually bynde them to the obedience of his will) out of their ſight, whileſt thei accompt more of gaine then of Godlineſſe, and wallowe in their vaine pleaſures and fleſhly delightes, as is infinitly ſeen at this daie. Who maketh not a tuſhe in his owne ſoule, to giue obediẽce to the Lorde in all the actions of his life? If outwardly to bragge that we are children of the righteous, to glorie in our titles, if not rightly to accompt of the excellencie of our high callyng with God, if to be hardly drawen to any good waie, and to goe ſwiftly to the waie of ſinne, if our filthie gaine though but in a vile thyng, or beaſtly delightes, bee of force to carie vs againſt the obedience of the will of God, bee to holde an eſtate with Eſawe as it is in deede, if onely thei haue ſealed vnto them the fauour of the Lorde, who by the power of the Spirite of Chriſt, are chaunged in their whole beeyng, and therefully led in the obedience of the wil of God,

2. Tim. 3. 2. 5.
2. Pet. 2. 3.

Ihon. 8. 3. 3

God, then is there iuſt cauſe, that all carnall Goſpellers, Libertines, careleſſe profeſſors and prophane men, ſhould intollerably feare before the anger of the Lord. And although thei be infinitly drunken with this vile conceapt, that ſo thei bee no Papiſtes, whiche vncleane beaſtes in deede remaine in their ſinnes, ſo thei profeſſe the Goſpell, alowe of the truthe and doctrine thereof as common men doe, in all thynges that touch not themſelues, that for the reſt, God is mercifull, and thei ſhall doe well enough howſoeuer thei liue: yet let them remẽber alwaies the example of Eſawe. He though not the excellencie of Gods callyng to be as it was, in the tyme of his vanitie, nor yet doe thei. He wept for a bleſſing, and it maie be ſome of them would gladly be ſaued: But true repentaunce, the waie whereby it is had, was farre from him, and who ſhall promiſe it vnto them? It maie bee, if the Lorde doe not conuert them, thei maie haue ſuche a repentaunce as Iudas had, a ſight of the righteous iudgementes of GOD and their owne ſinne: but ſuche a power in their owne ſoules, as maie ſoundly applie the free promiſes of God in Chriſt, and his whole righteouſ-

Luc 24 47.

neſſe

neſſe vnto them ſelues, it is onely from the Lorde, and reſteth not in the power of any childe of man, as maie well be ſeen in Eſaw, who is ſaide to haue founde no place to repentance, though he ſought the bleſſing with teares.

Againe, ſeing the Lorde maketh it knowen in ſome acceptable meaſure, who doe rightly profite in the profeſſion of his name vnto the aſſuraunce of his grace & free diſcharge from al daunger in the daie to come. As doeth appeare in the viſitation of the greate Citie ſpoken of in Ezekiel.9.4. commaundyng that all thei onely ſhall be ſealed to a ſure eſcape, that mourne & crie for the wickedneſſe of men: How ſhall theſe impure Macheuilles, Atheiſtes, Papiſtes, Libertines, beaſtly profeſſors, and carnall Goſpellers be put in hope of the fauour of God, who are ſo farre of from mournyng in their owne ſoules for the euilles of men, that their owne life is nothyng els, but a Sea of ſinne, and daiely proceedyng in continuall tranſgreſſion againſt the Lorde. And albeit it is moſte true, that whom the Lorde of glorie hath called from the death of ſinne to the life of righteouſneſſe, and cauſed that they walke not as thei did before, ſeueryng his Ephe.2.5.

people from the curse of the worlde, and the vsuall waies of men, yet very fewe there are found, that make conscience of any chaunge in them selues into those waies whiche bee accordyng to the Lorde. And though it be infinitely vrged vnto the myndes of men, that who soeuer is in Christ is a newe creature, that is, begunne to be chaunged in his whole soule and bodie, from corruption and sinne to the light and willing obedience of the will of God: Yet who maie not see that the most are wilfully ignoraunt of this waie, and that it is true in experience, that the Prophet saieth, that, Who so withdraweth himself frō euill must be spoiled. For where are not thei held commonly for the best mē, that beare an outwarde face to the Gospell, while their liues are moste full of euill, that sticke at nothing, but at that which is good. Who sweare, lye, and commit all abhominations, and yet saie thei are good Christians, and of many it is saide of them, that, thei are very good Protestants. But who so careth in all his life, to yeeld vnto the Lorde the fruites of an acceptable obedience from the grounde of a pure harte, and to square his thoughts, words & works after the rule of the worde of God, is made a praie to the rest.

2. Cor. 5. 17.

reſt. And beyng accompted as the skumme of the worlde, is ſet forthe to the ſhame and reproche of all men, whoſe vnbridled lippes and bloudie handes doe beſoyle and waſte them from daie to daie: So that the poore Saincte of the Lorde, maie ſtill renewe the ſong of the Churche in Dauids tyme: Except the Lorde had beene on our ſide, thei had long agoe ſwallowed vs vp quicke. And euen as of all the enemies that Iuda had, the tenne Tribes of Iſraell that were their bretheren, and gaue an outwarde profeſſion of the name of GOD with them, were the greateſt and moſte daungerous: Euen ſo amongſt all the enemies that Syon, Gods Churche hath, the moſte vehement and bitter are the falſharted and counterfaite Iſraelites, Papiſtes, and other Heretiques, and prophane men. Yet of all the reſt, as one enemie within the Citie is more daungerous then ten without, ſo careleſſe profeſſors and prophane men as thei haue moſte power to hurte, ſo are thei furiouſly enraged againſt the truthe of the waies of God, and beeyng ſet on fire to remaine in their ſinne, and euen ſell them ſelues to woorke wickedneſſe: but in vaine, for he that ſitteth on hight ſhal laugh them to ſcorne. The Lord ſhall haue Pſalm. 124. 1. 2. Pſalm. 2. 4.

them in deriſion. For can thei make any accomptes, that euer thei that haue beene iniurious to the Churche of GOD, and to his people, haue eſcaped the iuſt hande of the Lorde? Did not Abels bloud, vniuſtly ſhed by Caine when he thought hym ſelf to bee ſafe, crie vengeaunce on hym and his poſteritie for euer? Did Iſmaell or Eſawe go free, for their iniuries done to the Lordes ſeruantes? Went the reprochfull taunts for nought, that the olde and euill worlde did vſe againſt righteous Noe? Or Sodome for their ſinnes and iniuries againſt Lott? Or the Princes againſt Daniell? Was there euer Nation, Kingdome, or People, ſo mightie in power, ſo ſurpaſſing in policie, or wiſe in their generation, that haue ſet themſelues againſt God, his truth and people, and haue not taſted of his indignation in due time, and can theſe tyme ſcruers, hypocrites, and prophane men, perſwade themſelues that thei ſhall be the firſt? Doe thei not remember that the Lorde ſaieth to his Churche, Who ſoeuer in thee ſhall ſet himſelf againſt thee ſhall ſurely fall? Are not Nimrod, Pharao, Ieroboham, Nabuchadnezer, Darius, and Alexander, and many moe gone, their Kyngdomes laied waſte, and their great and famous

Gen.4.10.11.
Gala.4.29.
Pſalm.137.7.
2.Pet.2.5.
2.Pet.2.8.
Dan.6.8.

names

names raiſed from the earth? Is not their Religion chaunged from euill to worſe, their Cities, Townes, and Temples made dennes for wilde beaſtes and vncleane birdes, as the Lordes Prophets tolde long before? Can thei be more cruell then Nero, Diocleſian, Domitian, or ſuche like? Can thei paſſe Iezabell, Antiochus, or ſuche beaſtly tormentors? And yet in ſpite of them all, and all thei could doe, the Lord hath defended his, and powred vppon them the recompence of their waies, in his due tyme. If the wicked that now liue, could paſſe all theſe in madneſſe, and them ſelues in crueltie, yet ſhall this be iuſtly taken vp againſt them: Why do the heathen rage and the people murmure in vaine? *For he is infinitely more ſtrong that is with vs, then any that can be againſt vs. And though the wicked bende them ſelues, and runne together againſt the Lorde and his annointed: yet if wee weigh the cauſe well, wee ſhall euer finde it moſte true, that,* There are moe with vs thē with them. *Let the vngodly therefore haue their momentany ioye that ſhal ende with ſhame. And let vs ſtriue to be mynded as he, who ſaied:* The Lorde is my ſtrength ſaieth my ſoule, therefore will I truſt in hym, and

Pſalm.2.5.

2.Kin.6.16.

Iob.19.29.

Pſal.62.7.18.2.

vnder the shadowe of his winges shall be my refuge, &c. *For as the Lorde our moste good and mercifull father, doeth, according to his infinite Wisedome and endlesse compassion, prepare his people vnto hymself, tryyng what thei Wil beare for his names sake, euen so he doeth not assaie them aboue that he makes them able to beare: but armes them beyonde the thoughtes of the harte of man, till he sende them full deliueraunce of all euill. In these miserable daies Wherein We liue, as God in greate mercie hath staied the rage of our enemies, that thei can not so spoyle and make waste of the bodies and liues of the godly mynded, and suche as daiely labour and profite in the true feare of GOD, as is like thei would: so yet thei remaine themselues, euen men vowed and giuen ouer to the will of Sathan, hauyng their hartes sett on those thynges that are euill, and their feete swift to commit sinne. What their bloudie hands dare not attempt, their poisoned tongues spare not to spue out where soeuer thei come. Now that fire and faggot cease, their slaunderous liyng lippes are opened wide, and their vncleane mouthes made Brothelhouses of all vntruthe against the seruauntes of the Lorde. And where thei dare*

2. Cor. 12. 13.

Prou. 1. 16.

dare not openly blaſpheme the doctrine for feare of ſhame, thei ſecretly ſeeke to vndermine it, by inueighyng againſt the teachers and true profeſſors thereof, railyng, liyng, and ſlaundering, without care or conſcience what thei ſpeake, ſo that thei maie doe the miſcheefe that thei labour for. This kinde of perſecution is not leſſe greeuous to a godly mind, then the other, and yet it is euer true, the righteous are bolde as a Lyon, and a iuſtified mynde will tourne it ſelf vnto God, will beare his croſſe thankefully, accompting it for exceedyng ioye to be called out of the Lorde, to ſtande in his cauſe, and to ſuffer ſomewhat for his names ſake, confeſſing that the ſeruaũt is not aboue his Lord. If Chriſt our Lorde eſcaped not the venome of ſuche impoiſoned tongues: but thei called him Samaritane, and ſaide that he had a Deuill, let no true Chriſtian looke to be free. For if thei haue called the Maiſter of the houſe Beelzebub, what will thei call them of the houſholde? Dauid, a paterne of the Church of God, felt thoſe euilles, when he compared ſlaunderous tongues to Raſors and ſharpe ſwordes, and when he praied: Deliuer my ſoule O Lord from liyng lippes and from a deceiptfull tongue. *And* the Lorde cut

Prou.28.1.

Iames.1.2. Phil.1.29.

Math.10.24.

Ihon.8.48.

Math.10.25.

Pſalm.52.2.

Pſalm.120.2.

of all flatteryng lippes, and the tongue that ſpeaketh proude thynges. *And as the Prophet hath praied, ſo will it come to paſſe to all ſuche as with vniuſt reproches or otherwaies iniurie the Saincte of the Lord, and thei ſhall one daie approue it to be moſt true that is ſaid of our Sauiour Chriſt, that,*

Math.18.6. It were better a Milſtone were hanged aboute their neckes and they drowned in the depth of the Sea, thē that thei ſhould offende one of the leaſt of them that beleeue in hym. *For our owne partes, Wee ſee into What condition We are come, that vnder Poperie We are tormented and perſecuted with all extreame handling, and vnder the Goſpell We are ſlaundered and reuiled: ſo that We maie iuſtly ſaie With the Apoſtle:*

Rom.8.36. Pſalm.44.22. We are daiely accompted as Sheepe appoincted to be ſlaine. *And yet beyonde all this, Sathan hath preuailed in an other euill, whiche is more vneaſie to be borne to a godly mynd then all the reſt is. And that is to ſee, that Papiſtes and other Heretiques, the longer thei haue helde and practiſed their error, the more forWarde and ferUent thei bee in the Waie of ſinne, but many that ſeemed to haue well profited in knowledge of the Lordes truthe, haue at once*

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tourned out of the waie, and as beeyng in a dead ſleepe of ſecuritie, flatter themſelues in a naked knowledge without all true zeale to quicken the giftes that thei haue, to the honour of God and the good of his Saincts. It is accompted a notable poinct of exceedyng wiſedome in this daie with many, not to ſhewe a face to the truthe or to our bretheren before men, but as the moſte doe, Whiche is nothyng at all. When we firſt began to bee lightened with knowledge of the truthe, the Goſpell it ſelf was moſte ſweete vnto our ſoules, and the fellowſhippe of our bretheren was moſte deare and profitable vnto vs: but now Sathan hath beſotted vs with an imagination of knowledge, and almoſt who doeth not thinke it follie to be feruent, and a poinct almoſt of extreame madneſſe to make more accomptes of men as thei accompt of the Lorde, and yet we haue the preſident of the Spirite of God, to comforte vs in that waie. True knowledge in deede, and right zeale for the Lorde, are ioynt cõpanions, or rather Twinnes, that maie not be ſondered, whereby the harte is lightened and ſtirred vp to a chereſull and moſte readie obedience of the will of God, with deſire of his glorie and the good of his people be-

2. Theſſ. 1. 3.

fore all thynges in the worlde. And what maie we thinke of them that be otherwise, that pamper them selues either in a blinde zeale without care of knowledge, the waie to error, or in a bare knowledge thinking themselues wise despise the waie of the Lord, which is in true zeale and right knowledge of the Lordes waies according to his word. And their such proude accompt of nothing, taking the very shadowe of knowledge for true knowledge it self, maketh them secure, who of wise and zealous members of Gods Churche, according to the measure of their experience in that tyme, are now becomne vnprofitable Drones, and careless Epicures, and thinke them selues more wise (in their extreame follie) then euer thei were before. But it must needes be as the Lorde hath foretolde of the like, that thei are either stonie grounde, where the seede had no depth of yearth, or that it is choked with thornes, euen their harts eaten vp with the care of this world, whose ende will be worse, then the beginnyng.

Math.13.5.6.7. Luc.8.6.7.8. Math.12.45.

Some others there are that take exceptions at whom thei wil, and albeit the Lord hath testified that there is no respect of persons with hym, yet thei feare not to vpholde this

Act.10.34. Rom.2.11.

this imagination of their owne, that in respect of profityng and practise of true godlinesse, euery one in their place, it is more free for some men then for othersome, and for all men then for women. And that their such dreaming may appeare the more grosse, thei let not to saie, (with what purpose I leaue to them selues) that a woman should not bee more religious then her housbande, forgettyng belike, the approued examples of the Scriptures 1.Sam.25.3.Luc.8.3. *And how many holy women are infinitely mentioned in the worde, without any mention of their housbandes fall, and holy Histories testifie of very many, that haue māfully giuen their liues for the Gospell, when their housbandes haue beene backesliders, and some of them haue persecuted their poore wiues. And that thei maie bee founde to peruert the straight waies of the Lorde, thei saie a man should not take to wife (as the like) one that is more religious then hym self. I would aske these men whether a man maie take a wife that is more welthie then hymself, if thei graunt that he maie (as I trust thei will easily do) then shal thei be inforced to saie, either, that the thynges of this worlde are more to be esteemed, then the heauenly blessinges of the Spirite*

Acts.1.14. Rom.6.6.12.13 2.Tim.1.5. Luc.23.55.56. Luc.24.1. Read Maister Foxe, and by name Anne Askewe, and Prestes wife of Exceter.

Spirite of God, and the transitorie thynges of the bodie, more worth then the giftes of the mynde, or that a man not onely should: but also ought to make especiall choyce, as there are excellent blessinges in the inner man. And if the wife must be in all thynges a helper, then in the cheefe thynges it were absurde to saie she must bee vnapt to helpe. Thei maie remember that the Lords people haue from tyme to tyme, been forbidde to match themselues with the prophane, whiche necessarily intendeth the contrarie. But thei will except, that thei doe not denie, but the wife should haue some religion, but not more then her housbande: But thei should rather saie it is shame worthie in the housbande, who should be so farre before, to' come so farre behind. I aske, when the housbande hath no religion, and the wife must not haue more then he, or when he doth not labour for it, and she must not labour more then he: how muche is then left vnto her, either of religion, or of meanes to attaine vnto it, none at all. This is so farre of from continuyng them vnto all good duetie vnto their housbandes, wherevnto thei are fast bounde by the lawe of God: and suche as in truthe feare the Lorde, will I am right sure make

Gen. 2.18.

Deut. 7.3.
Iude. 3.7.

Ephe. 5.22.
Collo. 3.18.
1. Pet. 3.1.

make conſcience of: that it is to ſaie almoſt, that their ſaluation and the meanes of it, is not free, but at the deuotion of others, that God, his worde and grace, with the glorie of his name, are quite out of ſight, and the houſbande muſt be in his place. Let no man thinke that my meaning is to looſe the realmes of obedience in this caſe: for my whole deſire is quite contrarie. Firſt, that bothe the houſbande, and the wife, ſhould obey the Lorde, bothe as Chriſtians, and in their ſeuerall place: thei that are to gouerne, to gouerne in, and accordyng to the Lorde, and Collo. 3. 17.
thei that are to obey, to obey in, and accordyng to the Lorde. If any intende otherwayes, their authoritie will bee without the Acts. 4. 19.
Lorde, and deſerueth to bee ſo taken. Againe I aske, ſeyng the Lorde hath appointed this vnto all his children, that whatſoeuer thei haue gained of knowledge & practize in the worde of God, thei ſtill grow and 1. Thes. 4 1. 2.
goe forwarde to full perfection whether thei 2. Pet 3. 18.
be men or women: Who ſhall preſcribe a ſufficiẽcie, or dare ſaie that thei haue enough? Pſalm. 84. 7.
I wiſh we maie in this cleare light of knowledge leaue winking, as it were, at noone dayes, and tremble, thus to dallie, or thus to deale vniuſtly with the moſt holie truth of

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the Lorde, and to presse vniust iniuries vpon the soules of our poore bretheren, least in careless greeuyng the consciences of the Lordes annointed, we violently bryng vpon our selues the heauie wrathe and indignation of God.

If we in the truth of an humble soule do weigh the seuerall testimonies of the worde of the Lorde, to the right guiding of his seruaunts to the assuraunce of his grace in the obedience of his will, we shall easily be made able to meete with all these mischeefes and many moe, that might otherwaies preuaile to turne vs out of the waie. And as the Spirite of God hath amongst infinite other places of Scripture to that effect, by the Apostle Sainct Ihon in his first Epistle, proued that true iustification and eternall life is onely by Iesus Christ, and shewed further, that there is no assuraunce of this grace of the Lorde, where is not the effectuall power of the Spirite of the Sonne of God in the iustified (who are vnited vnto hym as the members vnto the head, and receiue of his fulnesse) to leade them in a continuall true obedience of his will reuealed in his worde, and in the truthe thereof, that thei might stand out immouably vnto the end, exhor-

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ted to beware of false teachers and all that deceiue, and reasoning from the effect to the cause, he proueth the truthe of the loue of God towarde vs, by our loue to the bretheren. Which beyng well considered of vs and applied to our seuerall vse in the direction of the Spirite of Christ, will not onely arme vs against Sathan in the former euilles: but make vs effectuallie wise in the waie of life. And as the same Epistle of Sainct Jhon is most sweete and plentifull in it self, being full of plaine witnesse of the grace of God, and effectuall testimonies who bee his: So is it most clerely & profitably opened and made plaine by the reuerende and moste worthie seruaunt of Iesus Christ, M. Caluin, in his tyme. Whiche his labours, in regarde of the greate good thei might doe to many fearing the Lorde, that want the knowledge of the tongue wherein he wrote: I haue (as my other occasions haue giuen me leaue) translated into the Englishe tongue, and offryng my poore labours therein to the Churche of GOD, I haue been bolde to commende the first fruites, as it were, vnto you, right hartely praiyng, that whatsoeuer the Lord shall therein open vnto you, that maie concerne you through conuersion, continuaunce, or

cherefull

cherefull constancie in the Lorde, that you will applie it nere vnto your soules, and that you maie so alwaies profite in the same, as may more & more seale vp vnto your seuerall consciences the effectuall assuraunce of the eternall grace of God in Iesus Christ, and make you able to stand vnder the burthens that you do, or shall indure from tyme to tyme, for the honour of his name. Maister Caluin also vpon Iude, and an Epistle of his owne written to a freend, I haue, as I might, translated likewise, and deliuered withall to the Printe, praiyng that the one and other, maie doe that good to Gods Churche, and namely to your selues, that I hartely wishe, and that you maie euer remaine together in the vnitie of truthe, and in all holy fellowship among your selues, and with the whole Church of God, growing vp from strength to strength, to a full measure of perfection in Iesus Christ, to whose mercies I shall not cease by his grace, to cõmend you and the whole Church of God for euer.

Yours assuredly in the Lorde. W. H.

THE COMENTA-

ries of M. Iohn Caluin,

vpon the first Epistle of Iohn.

The Argument.



His Epistle is most agreeable to his spirit, who before others was therfore beloued of Christ, that he might make him familiar vnto vs. Further, it contayneth Doctrine mixt with exhortations. It disputeth of the eternall deitie of Christ, together also of the incomparable grace, which being made manifest to the world he brought with him, & generally of all his benefits: and chiefly it commendeth and extolleth the inestimable grace of the adoption of the Lord. Thence it taketh the occasion to exhort. Sometimes it doth generally admonish to religious and holye lyfe, and againe by name it giueth preceptes of loue: but none of these it doth prosecute in continuaunce. For euerie where in teaching and exhorting he is diuerse, but especially he is plentifull in vrging to brotherly loue. It also toucheth other thinges briefly: as of ta-

king hæde of seducers and such other lyke. But euerie thing maye be obserued in his place.

CHAP. 1.

1 THat which was from the beginning, which we haue heard, which we haue seene with our eies, which wee haue looked vppon, which our hands haue handled of the word of lyfe.

2 And that life was made manifest, and wee haue seene and beare witnesse, and doo shewe vnto you that eternall lyfe, which was with the Father, and is made manifest vnto vs.



He sheweth that in the beginning lyfe was giuen vnto vs in Christ, which thing as it is an incomperable good, so it ought to rauish and inflame all our sences with a wonderfull loue and desire of it. Indeede this is spoken in fewe and simple wordes. That lyfe is made manifest. But if wee doe

doe account howe miserable and horrible the condition of death is: and agayne of what worthynesse the kingdome of GOD and his immortall glorye is: we shall heere perceiue some more excellent thing, then can bee expressed with anye wordes. This therefore is the purpose of the Apostle, when hee hath shewed the most excellent good thing, yea, the chiefe and alone happynesse, which GOD hath vouchsafed vs in his Sonne, to lighten our mindes. But because the greatnesse of the maker did require that the truth should be certaine and approued, hee tourneth much in this part. For all these Which wee haue seene, which wee haue hard, which wee haue looked vppon, &c. are effectuall to establish the credite of the Gospell. Nor indeed doeth hee adde so greate a desire to affection without cause. Seeing that our safetie doeth consist in the Gospell, the certaintie thereof is a thing more then necessarie. And howe vntowarde wee are to beleeue, euerye one of vs by his owne experyence doeth knowe too well. I call, to beleeue, not lightly to imagine, or in only assenting, to allow that which is spoken: but to imbrace it with a certaine & vndoubted perswasion, so that we dare subscribe as to a knowen truth.

By this occasion the Apostle doth multiply so many things heere in confirmation of ỹ gospell.

1 That which was from the beginning. Because it is a broken and confused speach, that the sence maye bee giuen more plaine, so the words are to be resolued. We declare vnto you, the word of life, which from the beginning hath by all meanes, bene truly testified vnto vs, how life was made manifest in it. Or if you had rather otherwise, Whatsoeuer we shew you of the word of life, it was from the beginning, and it was openly shewed to vs: because life is made manifest in it. But this member, That which was from the beginning, is vndoubtedly referred to the diuinitie of Christ, for God was not manifested in the flesh from the beginning: but hee who alwayes was life, and the eternal word of God, in the fulnesse of time became man. Againe, those things that follow of the beholding and feeling with handes, doe more belong to the humane nature. But because two natures make one perso, & that one is Christ, who came out from the father, that he might take vppon him our flesh, the Apostle doth worthely shewe forth in common together, that he hath ben alwayes inuisible and afterwards

wards seene. Wherby is refelled ỹ rotten cauill of Seruetus, that there is one nature and being of the deitie with the flesh, and moreouer that the word is transformed into flesh: because ỹ liuing word was seene in the flesh. Let vs remember therefore, that this doctrine of the Gospell is auouched, that he who in the flesh did truly proue himselfe to be the sonne of God, & was acknowledged for the sonne of God, was alwaies the inuisible word of God. And yet he doeth not heere assigne the beginning of the world, but ascendeth higher.

Of the word of life. The Genitiue case is taken in the place of an Epithite for quickening, because as he teacheth in the first chapter of the Gospell, In it was life: albeit this title doth belong to the Sonne of God by a double right, both because he hath plentifully poured life vpon all creatures, and because he now repaireth life in vs, which was put out and perished by Adams sinne. Yea, moreouer the name it selfe of the word, may be expounded two manner of waies, either of Christ, or of the doctrine of the Gospel: for by that also, health is brought vnto vs. But, because the substaunce thereof is Christ, and it doth not contayne anye other thing, then that hee at length was manifested vnto men, who al-

waies was with the Father: the first Exposition seemeth to me more simple and more naturall. Further that the wisedome which dwth remayne in God, is called the word, is euidently seene by the Gospell.

That which wee haue heard, That which wee haue seene. This hearing, was not of anye spread reporte, whereto small creditte vseth to bee giuen: but Iohn meaneth, that of those things which hee taught, hee was first effectually taught of his master, so that hee set forth nothing rashly. And in truth, no man shall bee a profitable Teacher in the Church, who hath not first himselfe bene a Disciple of the Sonne of GOD, and rightlye instructed in his Schole, seeing that his authoritie alone ought to bee of most force.

Whereas hee sayeth, that hee Did see it with his eyes, it is not a Pleonasmos, but a greater expressing for amplification sake. Yea, not being contented with a simple sight, hee addeth, Wee looked vppon, and our handes haue handeled. By which wordes, hee dwth testifie that hee taught nothing, which hee had not throughlye approued. Yet the approuing of the senses, seemeth smallye

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to be profitable to the present cause: For the vertue of Christ cannot bée comprehended with eyes or handes. I aunswere that the same thing is spoken héere, which is in the first Chapter of his Gospell: We haue séene his glorie, that is, glorie worthye the onely begotten Sonne of GOD. For the Sonne of GOD was not acknowledged according to the outwarde forme of his bodie: but by that whereas he shewed forth famous experiences of his diuine power: so that in him, as by a liuely and expresse Image, did shine the maiestie of the Father. Whereas the wordes are of the plurall number, and the matter doth most indifferently appertaine vnto all the Apostles, I dw willyngly interprete it of them: especiallye because the question is of the authoritie of the testimonye.

But, no lesse friuolous, as I lately touched, and to be shamed at, is the lewdnesse of Seruetus, who vrgeth these wordes, whereby to prowe that the worde of GOD hath bene visible and palpable. Hée doth wickedlye either destroye the two Natures, which is in Christ, or mingle them confusedly together.

He therefore doth imagine I wot not what lie, so deifying the humanitie of Christ, that he doeth vtterly take from him the truth of mans nature, denying in ỳ meane time that Christ is any other way the sonne of God, except because he was conceiued of his mother by the power of the holye Ghost, and taking from him his proper abiding in God. Wherevpon it followeth, that he is neither God nor man, albeit he sæme to forge a cõfused Masse of both. But because the minde of the Apostle is vndoubted vnto vs, let vs passe by that Dogge.

2 And the life was made manifest. This note of ioyning together is hære put in stæde of shewing plainly. As if he should haue said, We do giue witnesse of the word that giueth life, euen as life were made manifest. Albeit the sence maye be double, either that Christ was giuen, who is life and the fountaine of life, or that life was plainely offered to vs in Christ. And this later doth necessarily follow of the first. As much yet as doth belong to the signification of the words, these two differ betwæne themselues, as the cause and the effect. Where secondly he rehearseth, Wee shew eternal life. I doubt not but ỳ he speketh of the effect: that is, that we attaine vnto life

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by the benefite of Christ. Wherevppon wee gather that Christ cannot bee preached vnto vs, but the kingdome of heauen is opened vnto vs, that beeing raised from death, we might liue the life of God.

Which was with the Father. This is true, not onely since the worlde was made, but also from the first eternitie. For God was alwayes the fountaine of life, but the power and abilitie of quickening was in his eternall wisedome, which yet he did not shew forth before the creation of the worlde. And since God beganne to giue his worde, that power which before was hid, hath dispearsed it selfe into the creatures. Nowe this was some manifesting, but the Apostle respecteth another thing, that is, that thē life was made manifest in Christ, when he being clothed w̄ our flesh, did performe the partes of redemption. For albeit the Fathers vnder the lawe were fellowes and partakers of the same lyfe: yet we knowe they were shut vp vnder the hope, which afterwarde shoulde bee reuealed. It was of necessitie vnto them that they should seeke lyfe from the death & resurrection of Christ. But the matter was not onely farre separate from theyr eyes, but it was also hidde from theyr mindes. They

therefore depend vpon the hope of the Reuelation, which at the last in his time did followe.

They coulde not indéede obtaine lyfe, except by some meanes béeing made manifest vnto them. But betwixt them and vs there is a great difference, because whom they sought darkly in figures being promised vnto them, we nowe apprehend him, béeing giuen as it were with our handes. But the purpose of the Apostle is, to take awaye the opinion of newnesse, which might impayre the dignitie of the Gospell. By which occasion he sayth, That lyfe did not now beginne of late, as if it hadde latelye appeared, because it hath bene for euer with the Father.

3 That which we haue seene and heard, doe we shew vnto you: that you also may haue fellowshippe with vs, and that our fellowship may be with the father, and with his sonne Iesus Christ.

4 And these things we write vnto you, that your ioye may be full.

5 And this is the promise which wee declare vnto you, that GOD is lyght, and in him is not any darknesse.

6 If

6 If wee saie wee haue fellowshippe with him, and walke in darknesse, we lie, and doe not the truth.

7 But if wee walke in light as hee is in light, wee haue fellowshippe one with another, and the bloude of Iesus Christ his sonne, doth cleanse vs from all sinne.

3 That which wee haue seene. Now hée doeth the third time repeate his hauing séene and heard, least anie thing might bée wanting to the effectuall certainetye of his Doctrine. And that is dilygentlye to bée noted, that the Preachers of the Gospell are chosen of Christ, who might be fit and faithfull witnesses of all those thinges which they shoulde speake. Together also hée witnesseth the affection of his minde: because hée sayeth hée is not moued with anye other reason to write, but that hée maye prouoke and incite them to whome hee writeth, to approch to the fellowshippe of an inestimable good, whereby it well appeareth, howe much care he hath of their saluation, which auayleth not a little to procure other good and vertuous thinges, for we are to

to

to vnkind if we refuse to heare him, who desireth to communicate with vs parte of that happinesse, which he himselfe hath gotten. He then expresseth ỹ fruit which is attained vnto by the gospell, that is, ỹ we might be made at one with God, & with his sonne Christ, wherin consisteth the chiefe goodnesse.

This second member ought to haue bene added, not onely that he might make the doctrine of the Gospell precious and delightful, but also that he might shewe that he desired them to be his fellowes, to no other ende, but that he might bring them to God, and so all might be one in him. For ỹ wicked also haue their mutual coniunction among themselues, but without God, yea, that they may more and more estrange themselues from God, which is the vttermost poynt of all the wicked. But this, as was said euen now, is our onely happinesse, to be receiued into fauor of God, that we may be truly knit vnto him in Christ: of which Iohn. 17. chapt. In conclusion, Iohn pronounceth, that like as the Apostles are adopted of Christ to be his brethren, that being gathered into one bodie, they may remaine fast vnto God: that so he with the rest of his fellowes in that businesse, doth perfourme this, that of this sacred and blessed

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vnitie there may be many copartners.

4 That your ioye. By the name of full ioye, he doth more fitly expresse the full and perfect happinesse, which we attaine vnto by ỹ Gospel. He doth withal admonish ỹ faithful where they ought to haue all their affections fixed. True is that prouerbe, Where our treasure is, there is our heart. Mat. 6. 21. Whosoeuer therefore doth truly perceiue, of what worthinesse that fellowship is with God, hée doth wáll sufficiently satisfie himselfe wỏ this alone, & doth not further boyle with sundrye desires. The Lord is my cup, saith Dauid, and mine inheritaunce. The lot is falne vnto me in pleasant places. Psal. 16. 5. 6. After the same manner, Paule sheweth, that all thinges wer vnto him as dunge, that he might possesse Christ alone. Phi. 3. 8. Wherefore in fine he hath profited in the Gospel, who estéeming himselfe happie in the fellowship of god, doth rest himselfe in it alone, and so prefer it before all the worlde, that for it he be prepared to forsake all.

5 And this is the promise. I do no lesse allow that which the olde interpreter hath yéelded, This is the declaratiõ. For albeit [Epaggelia] with the Grecians doth often signifie a promise, yet because Iohn speaketh héere of

of the testimonie, whereof he had made mention a little before, the text seemeth rather to require the other sense: except possiblye yon may resolue it thus, The promise, which wée bring vnto you, doth draw this with it, or hath this condition knitte vnto it. By this meanes we shal vnderstand the minde of the Apostle. Neither indéede doth hée heere comprehende the whole doctrine of the Gospell: but sheweth that this is requyred, if we will inioye Christ and his benefittes, that we become lyke vnto GOD in righteousnesse, and holynesse: lyke as Paule saieth. Tit. 2. 11. That Grace of GOD which bringeth saluation to all men hath appeared, and teacheth vs to denye vngodlynesse and worldly lustes, and teacheth vs to lyue soberlye, iustlye, and godlye, in this present worlde. Excepte because hée teacheth by a Metaphore, that wée must walk in the light because God is lyght.

Further, whereas sometimes hée calleth GOD lyght, and sometimes sayeth, Hée is in the lyght, the wordes are not to be vrged too much. Why Sathan shoulde bée called the Prince of darkenes, it is euident inough. Therefore when GOD on the contrarye parte

parte is called the Father of light, and light it selfe, first wee may vnderstande, that there is nothing in him, but that which is cleare, pure, and sincere: then, that he doth so lighten all things with his brightnesse, that hee suffereth nothing that is defiled or vneeuen, no blemishes or vncleannesse, no hypocrisie or deceipt, nor any other euill to lye close or hidde.

Therefore this is the Summe: Seeing there is no agreement betweene lyght and darkenesse, that while wee walke in darkenesse, wee are at enmitie with GOD. Therfore that that societie which hee mentioned cannot otherwise stande, then if wee also bee accordingly pure, holy, and full of lyght.

In him there is no darkenesse. This manner and kinde of speaking which is heere vsed, is verye familiar with Iohn, that hee maye amplyfie by a contrary denfall that which hee hath before affirmed. Therefore the sense is. That GOD is such a lyght as that hee admitteth no darkneſſe at all. Wherevpon it followeth that hee doth continnallye hate an euill conscience, and a defiled, lewde, and wicked lyfe and conuersation,

tion, & whatsoeuer doth sauour of darknesse.

6 If we saie. It is an argument of repugnaunces; whilest he gathereth that they are straungers from God, which walke in darkenesse, yet this whole doctrine doth depend vppon a more high principle, that is, that GOD doth sanctifie his children. For it is not indeede a bare precepte, whereby he doth require of vs an holy life, but rather he sheweth that the grace of Christ is also effectuall vnto this, that the darknesse beeing driuen awaie, it may kindle the lyght of God in vs. As if he should haue sayd, whereas God doth communicate himselfe with vs, it is no vaine counterfait, but it is of necessitie, that the power and effect of this societie doe shew forth in our life, or else the profession of the Gospell shall be counterfait. Whereas he addeth, We doe not the truth. It is as much as if he shoulde haue sayde, we doe not truly, or we haue not in estimation ỹ which is true and right. And it is that manner of speaking, which I noted first to be in plentifull vse with him.

7 But if we walke in the light. Now he saith that this is a certaine marke of our coniunction with God, if we be made lyke vnto him, not that the pureneſſe of life doe recon-

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tile God vnto vs as the first cause: but the Apostle meaneth, that by the effect it is apparant that we are knit vnto God, if his pureneſſe doe ſhine in vs. And indéede ſo is the matter, that whereſoeuer God doeth come, all things are ſo fully repleniſhed with his holyneſſe, that wipeth awaie all vncleanneſſe: but without him wée haue nothing but vncleanneſſe & darkneſſe. Hence it appeareth that no man liueth well, except alſo he cleaue faſt vnto God. Where he ſayth that we haue fellowſhippe one with another, it is not ſimplie referred to men, but he placeth God on the one parte and vs on the other. Yet it may bée demaunded, what man came ſo expreſſe the light of God in his lyfe, that this lykeneſſe which Iohn requyreth, maye bée apparaunt, for by this meanes it muſt néedes be, that he is altogether cleane and without darkneſſe. I anſwere that theſe kinde of ſpéeches are to be fitted to the capacitie of men. Therefore he is ſayd to bée lyke vnto GOD, that doeth aſpire vnto his ſimilitude, howe farre ſo euer yet he be from the ſame. And no example is to be fetched elſe where, then from this preſent place.

Hee walketh in darkneſſe. Whoſoeuer is not guided by the feare of God, nor in a

pure conſcience reſpecteth this end, that wholy giuing himſelfe to God, he doth ſtudie to promote his glorie. Therefore on the contrarie, he that in the ſincere affection of his hart, conforming his lyfe and all the partes of it to the feare and obedience of God, doth purely worſhippe him, albeit he faile in manye things, and ſo moane vnder the burthen of the fleſh, hee is taken to walke in the light, becauſe he holdeth the right waie. It is therefore the alone vprightneſſe of conſcience, which doth diſcerne betweene light and darkneſſe.

And the bloud of Ieſus Chriſt. After he hath taught of what manner is the bonde of our vnitie with God, hee alſo ſheweth the fruit that iſſueth from thence: that is, that then our ſinnes are freely forgiuen vs. And this is that bleſſednelſe, which Dauid deſcribeth in the 32. Pſalme. That we may know our ſelues to be moſt miſerable, vntil we being regenerate by the ſpirit of God, do ſeru him in a cleane heart. For what canne be thought more miſerable then man, whom god hath in hatred & abhomination? Vpon whom together doth reſt the wrath of God & eternal death? This is a place worthy noting, whē we firſt learne, ꝑ then the ſatiſfaction gotten

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by the death of Christ, doth properly belong vnto vs, whē we imbrace righteousnes with a right purpose of heart. For Christ is not a redeemer, but vnto them who beeing tourned from iniquitie, do lead a newe life. Wherfore if we desire to haue God mercifull vnto vs, that he may forgiue our sinnes, we must not excuse our selues. Finally, from repentance, remissiō of sins cānot be separate, neither can our consciences haue peace with god, where ẏ feare of God doth not beare rule. Secondly, this place doth teach, that the frée forgiuenes of sinnes is not once onely giuen vnto vs, but that this benefit remaineth perpetually in the Church, and is daily offered to the faythfull. For the Apostle doth héere speake to the faithfull, as in truth there was neuer anie, nor euer shall be, which can otherwise please God, sæing all are holden with guiltinesse before God. For whatsoeuer kinde of desire to doe well be in vs, we alwaies goe vnperfectly to the Lord. Further, whatsoeuer is an halfe part, deserueth no praise with God. Wée againe in the meane time do reiect our selues from ẏ grace of God, as much as lieth in vs. So it cōmeth to passe, ẏ all the Saints haue néed of daily forgiuenes of sins, because ẏ this onely doth continue vs in ẏ houshold of God,

Where he saith, From all sinne, he doth signifie, that by many meanes we are guilty before God: as indeede there is no man that is not defiled with very many sinnes. But he teacheth that no sinnes do hinder the righteous and such as feare God, wherby they may the lesse please God. He also sheweth the way to obtaine forgiuenesse, and the cause of our being made cleane: that is, because Christ hath purged our sinnes with his bloud. But he affirmeth that all the godly shall vndoubtedly be partakers of this being made cleane from sinne. This whole part of doctrine hath bene wickedly corrupted of the Schoolemen: for they fain, that the free pardon of sinnes, is onely giuen vnto vs in Baptisme: they doe graunt, that there onely the bloud of Christ is effectuall. But after Baptisme they teach, that we are no otherwise reconciled to God, then by satisfactions. And heere they leaue indeede some part to the bloud of Christ: but when they ascribe vnto workes, commendation and power to satisfie for sinnes, and to please God, but in the least measure, they do wholly ouerthrow, ỹ which Iohn saith heere, For these wil neuer agree betweẽ thẽselues, That we are purged by the bloud of Christ, and that workes are cleansings from sinne:

because Iohn here assigneth not the one halfe, but the whole to the bloud of Christ. This therefore is the summe, that the faithfull do certainly assure themselues, that they are accepted with God: because he is pacified towardes them by the Sacrifice of the death of Christ. Wherefore the power and effect of all these, resteth in the onely bloude of Christ. Whereby is refelled the Papists most horrible inuention of Indulgences: for, as if the bloud of Christ were not sufficient, they require also the bloud and merites of Martyrs to be an help. And yet this blasphemie amongest them spreadeth further: for when their keyes, in which they holde that remission of sins is included, are coyned, partly of ỹ bloude and merits of martirs, and partly of ỹ workes of superrogation, with which euerye sinner doth redeeme himselfe, there remaineth to the no remission of sinnes, which doth not derogate from the bloude of Christ. For if theyr doctrine should haue place, then shall not the bloud of Christ purge vs, but shal onely concurre as an help in part. And by this meane the consciences shal hang in doubt, which the Apostle commaundeth here to rest in a sound assuraunce.

8 If we say, that wee haue no sinne, wee deceiue our selues, and the Truth is not in vs.

9 If we confesse our sinnes, hee is faithfull and iust, that hee maye forgiue vs our sinnes, and to cleanse vs from all vnrighteousnesse.

10 If we say we haue no sinne, we make him a lier, and his word is not in vs.

NOW he commendeth that grace by necessitie. For because no man is free from sinne: he sheweth that we are all cast away and without hope of remedie, except ỹ Lord do help vs by ỹ way of forgiuenesse. This is the reason why he so vehemently vrgeth, that no man is innocent: that all maye the better knowe, that they haue nede of mercye, which maye deliuer them from banishment, and so they might the more be stirred vp to the obtayning of this same so necessarye a good.

By the name of sinne is noted not onelye a wicked and defiled inclination: but the fault which doth truely make vs guiltie before GOD.

Further,

Further, seeing the speach is generall: it followeth, that none of the Saints, which are, which were, or which shall be, are exempted from this number. Wherefore Augustine doth exceeding fitlie refell the cauill of the Pelagians with this testimonie, and doth also wiselye weigh, that the confession of guyltinesse is required, not for humilities sake: but lest in lying we deceiue our selues. When he addeth, The truth is not in vs. After his manner he confirmeth the former sentence by rehearsing it againe: albeit it is not a simple rehearsing as other where, but he sayth they are deceiued because they glorie in lying.

9 If wee confesse. Againe, hée promiseth the faythfull, that GOD will be fauourable vnto them, so that they acknowledge themselues to be sinners. For it is a most excellent thing that wée bée certainlye perswaded, that there is a readie and prepared Reconciliation for vs with GOD, when we haue sinned otherwise wée continually beare Hell shutte vp within vs. Few indéede do weigh this, howe miserable and vnhappie a thing the wauering and vnquietetnesse of mans conscience is: But so the case standeth with vs, that hell doth raigne

where ther is not peace with God. How much more ought we to imbrace this promise with all our heart, which offereth assured forgiuenesse to all that doe confesse their sinnes. Further, he teacheth that it is founded vppon the faith and righteousnesse of God, because God who hath promised is true and plaine, for they that thinke he is called iust, because he doeth iustifie vs freely, in my iudgement, do reason too subtilly. For this iustice depẽdeth of faith, but each of them is anexed to the promise, for otherwise God may be iust, & yet deale with vs in most high iustice: but because he hath bound himselfe to vs by his word, he will not be taken for iust except hee doe forgiue. But this confession when it is referred to God, requireth a sincere affection of the heart, and ỹ heart cannot speak to God without newnesse of lyfe. Therefore it doeth containe in it true repentance. God indeede forgiueth freely: but so, that his easines to mercie, be not an intisement to sinne.

Shall cleanse vs. The word of purging seemeth to be taken in another sence then before. For he said we were cleansed by the bloud of Christ, because by his benefit our sins are not laid to our charge. But now after that he hath spoken of forgiuenesse, he addeth also ỹ God doth

doth purge vs from vnrighteousnes, that this second member may be diuers from the first. So he signifieth that a double fruit doth arise to vs of confession, that God being pacified w̄ the sacrifice of Christ, doth forgiue vs, and ỹ he doth correct and amend vs. If anie man obiect, ỹ while we are in this world, we are neuer purged frō all vnrighteousnesse, as much as belongeth to reformatiō, it is true indeede: but Iohn doth not teach, what God doth now perfect in vs. He is faithful, he saith, ỹ he may make vs cleane. ỹ is not to day nor to morow. For as long as we are cōpassed about w̄ flesh, we must be in continual going forward. But that which he hath once begun, he doth dayly procēde to do, till at the last he doth performe it. So Paule saith, That we are elect, that we may appeare before God wout reproofe. Eph. 1.4. and elsewhere, ỹ the church is cleansed, ỹ it may be without spot or wrinkle: Eph. 5.27. Albeit if anie had rather interpret this place otherwise, as if he spake one thing twice, I leaue it frē.

10 We make him a lyar. Hē goeth further, that they blaspheame GOD, which claime pureneſſe vnto themselues. For we sē howe that euerie where hē condempneth all mankinde of sinne. Wherefore hē entereth

battayle with God: whosoeuer seeketh to shunne this determination, and doth reproue him of a lye, as if he did presse them that deserued it not. For confirmation sake he addeth, that His word is not in vs. As if he shuld haue sayde, that we cast aside that his so excellent doctrine, which includeth all vnder guiltinesse. Wherevpon we gather, that then we haue rightly profited in the worde of the Lord, when we are truely humbled, ỹ mourning vnder the burden of our sinnes, we learne to flye to the mercie of God, and rest our selues no other where then in the fatherly frée mercie of God.

Chap. 2.

1 LIttle children, these things I write vnto you, that you sinne not, but if any man sinne, we haue an aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ the righteous.

2 And hee is the propitiation for our sinnes, and not for ours onelye, but also of the whole world.

THis is not onely a briefe rehearsing of the former doctrine, but almost a sum of the whole Gospell. That we abstaine from sinne: and

and yet because we are alwaies subiect to the iudgement of GOD, wee are certaine that Christ doth make intercession with the sacrifice of his death, that he maye reconcile the Father vnto vs. In the meane also he vseth a predication, least anie man shoulde thinke that he giueth libertie to sinne, when he preacheth of the mercie of GOD, and teacheth, that it is set forth vnto vs all. Hee therefore ioyneth together two partes of the Gospell, which prepostrous men separating, doe rend & make lame the Gospel it selfe. Further, the doctrine of grace hath euer ben subiect to the slaunders of wicked men: when the forgiuenesse of sinnes is set forth in Christ, then they bragge that there is graunted libertye to sinne. That the Apostle maye meete with these mischifes, at the first hee sheweth that this is the end of his doctrine, that men shuld cease to sinne. For when he sayth, That you should not sinne: He onely meaneth this, that they should abstaine from sinne, as much as they are able for the imperfectiõ of man. And hereto tendeth that which I handled before of the societie with God, ý we might be made like vnto him. Yet in the meane time he ceaseth not to speak of ý free forgiuenesse of sins, because ý albeit ý the Sky should fall, & all

things

thinges be confused together, yet this parte of doctrine is neuer to be omitted, but that ỹ office of Christ must be preched plainly and to the purpose, and this it betoumeth vs to do at this day. And because flesh is prone vnto lowsenesse, men are diligently to bee put in minde, that righteousnesse and saluation is therefore gotten by the death of Christ, that we may be an holy people of God. Yet howsoeuer it come to passe that many do wickedly abuse the mercie of God, and also many dogs do slaunderously speake euill of vs, as if we let lose the reynes to wickednesse: we must goe forward constauntly in auouching the grace of Christ, in which the glory of God doth most notably shine, and the whole saluation of man consist. These barkings (I say) of the wicked, are to be despised, wherewith we see ỹ the Apostles were assailed. For this cause, he straight addeth ỹ second member, That we haue an aduocate, when we haue sinned: by which words he confirmeth that which he had before. Because we are farre from perfect righteousnes, yea we daily increase our guiltinesse: that there is together a present remedie to appease God, if we flie vnto Christ. And this onely is it, wherin consciences may quiet themselues, wherein resteth the righteousnesse

ulnesse of man, and in which is established he hope of saluation. The conditional mem- er, If any man, must be resolued into a cau- all: for it cannot be but we sinne. Finallye, ohn sheweth, that we are not onely called rom sinne by the Gospell, because that there God doth call vs vnto himselfe, and offereth he spirit of regeneration: but also that the retched sinners are comforted, as hauing God alwaies mercifull vnto them: and that heir sinnes wherewith they are holden do not let, but that they are iust neuertheless, ecause they haue a mediator, who doth recō- ile them to God. Further, when he goeth a- bout to shew how we become again in fauor with God, he saith, that Christ is our aduo- cate. For in this he appeareth before the face of God, that hee may shew forth the efficacie of his sacrifice towards vs. To the ende this may be better vnderstood, I will speak more plainly. The intercession of Christ, is the con- tinuall applying of his death vnto our salua- tion. Whereas therefore God doth not im- pute our sinnes, hence it is because he hath respecte vnto Christ, our earnest Intercel- lour.

But the two titles wherewith hée after- warde adorneth Christ, do properly belong

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to the circumstaunce of this place. He calleth him Iust, and Reconciliation: It behoueth that he be indued with both, that he maye beare the office and person of an Aduocate: for what sinner can obtaine for vs the fauor of God? For therefore we are all driuen from hauing accesse vnto him, because no man is pure and voyd of sinne. No man therefore is a fit high Priest, but he that is innocent and seperate from sinners, as also is testified, Heb. 17. verse 26. Reconciliation is added, because without Sacrifice, none is a fitte high Priest.

Therfore vnder the Lawe, the Priest neuer went into the Sanctuarie without bloud: and Sacrifice with prayer, as if a solemne seale were wont to bee added by the ordinaunce of GOD. By which token, GOD woulde haue it knowen, that hee which shoulde obtaine fauour for vs, must bee prepared with Sacrifice. For when God is offended, the price of satisfaction to pacifie him is required. Hence it followeth, that all the Saints which haue bene, and which shal be, haue neede of an aduocate: and that there is none sufficient to vndergoe this office but onely Christ. And in truth Iohn hath ascribed to Christ these two Epethytes by name,

that

that he might shewe him to be the onely aduocate. And as there commeth vnto vs therby exceeding consolation, when we heare that Christ dyed not onelye once, that hee might pacifie his Father towardes vs: but continuallye make intercession for vs, that the waye might bee open for vs vnto the father in his name, that our prayers might bee heard: so is it chiefelye to bee taken heede vnto, least the honour that is appropriate and due to him alone, be transferred to another.

But we knowe in the Papistrie, this office was ascribed indifferently to the Saints. Nowe there bee almost thirtie yeares, since this excellent Principle of our Faith was almost buryed: That Christ is our Aduocate. They confesse in deede at this daye that there is one of manye, but not alone. They that among the Papistes haue some more modestye, denye not that Christ dooth excell aboue all other Aduocates whatsoeuer: but neuertheless afterwardes they associate vnto him, a great rabblement of companions. But the wordes of Iohn in this place do plainlye manifest, that hee cannot in anye wise bee an Aduocate, that is not a Priest.

Fur-

Further the Priesthode appertaineth vnto none but vnto Christ alone. In ỹ meane time we take not awaie the mutual intercession of Saints, whereby among thẽselues they exercise charity. But this is nothing to them that are dead, who are separate from the felowship of men, and nothing to those defences which they counterfait to thẽselues, least they shuld onely cleaue to Christ. For albeit that brethren pray for their brethren, yet without exceptiõ they all respect one head defender. It is therefore no doubt, but the Papists doe set against Christ euen so many Idolles, as they imagine Patrones vnto themselues. But it is to be noted by the waie, that they erre to grosely, which tumble Christ at his Fathers knees, that he might praie for vs. Such imaginations must be taken awaie which derogate from the diuine glorie of Christ: and the simple doctrine is to be held, that the fruite of his death doe remaine fresh and perpetuall for vs, that by his intercession he reconcileth God vnto vs, and as well doeth sanctifie our prayers by the sweete smell of his sacrifice, as help them by the fauour of his supportation.

2 Not for ours alone. He hath added this for amplification sake, that the faythfull may be assuredly perswaded, that the redemption got-

gotten by Christ is extended to al, which shal receiue the Gospel in faith. But hære is moued a questiõ. How the sinnes of all ẏ world should be done away? I omit the dotages of such franticke fellowes, who vnder the pretence of this, admit to saluation all the reprobate, moreouer Sathan himselfe. Such a monstrous fantasie, is not worthie the refutation. They that would escape this absurditie, haue said, that Christ suffered sufficiently for the whole world: but onely effectually for the elect. This solution hath commonlye preuailed in the schooles. Albeit that I grant that saying to be true, yet I denie that it agræth with this place. For Iohn had none other purpose, then to make this good common to ẏ whole Church. Therefore vnder ẏ word All he doth not comprehend ẏ reprobate: but pointeth out those which together were to belæue, & wer scattered into diuers parts of the worlde. For then is the grace of Christ made manifest as is meet, when he is preched to be the only sauing health of the world.

3 And in this we knowe, that wee haue knowen him, if we keep his cõmandements.

4 He that saith, I know him, and kepeth not his commaundements, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But he that keepeth his word in him is the loue of God perfect indeed. In this wee knowe that we are in him.
6 He that saith that he abideth in him, ought euen so to walke as he hath walked.

3 AFter he hath handled ỹ doctrine of the frée remission of sins, he cõmeth againe to ỹ exhortations annexed, & dependeth vpon it: & first he admonisheth that ỹ knowledge of God, which is conceiued by the Gospell is not idle: but doth of it selfe bring forth obedience. Afterwards, he sheweth, what God doth especially require of vs, what is ỹ chiefe in our life: namely, that we loue God. That which we read héere of the effectuall knowledge of God, the Scripture doth not euerye where repeate without cause: for ther is nothing more common to the worlde, then to draw the doctrine of godlinesse to vaine speculations. After this manner was diuinitie adulterated among the sophisticall Sorbonists, ỹ of all their knowledge, not so much as the least spark of godlines could appeare. And vaine men euery where do onely learn from the word of God, that which they may babble out for ostentation sake. Finally, in all ages, this was too common an euil, to talk

vain-

vainly of ỹ name of God. Iohn therefore throweth this principle, That the knowledge of God is effectuall. Wherevpon he gathereth, that they do not know God, that kéepe not his commandements. Plato, though groping in the darke in Phædro, and other places denieth, that that excellent beautie which hée imagineth can be knowen, but that it will forceably carrie a man into the admiration of it. Therfore how may it be, that thou canst know God, & be touched with no affection? Neither indéede doth this proceed onely from the nature of God, that we immediatelye loue him whome wée knowe: but the same spirit which doth lightē our minds, doth lykewise breath into our hartes an affection like vnto our knowledge. Albeit ỹ knowledge of God bringeth this with it, ỹ we feare & loue him: for neither can we acknowledge him as he sheweth himself to be Lord & father, except we yéelde our selues againe to him obedyent children and dutifull seruaunts. Briefly, the doctrine of the gospel is a liuely glasse, wherin we beholding the image of God, are changed into it, as Paule teacheth. 2. Cor. 3. 18. Wherefore where there is not present a good conscience, ỹ shew of knowledge cannot be but vaine. This is to be marked when he saith,

That we know that we haue knowen. For he noteth that obedience of God is so knit vnto the knowledge, that yet knowledge bee first in order: as it is of necessitie, that the cause be before the effect.

If we keepe his commaundements. But there is no man, that doth keepe them in euerie part. By that meanes then should bee no knowledge of God in the world? I answere, that the Apostle is not at oddes with himself. When therefore he had lately set all men in guiltines before God, he doth not vnderstand that they keepe the commaundements, which satisfie the lawe in all poynts (which example can no where be found in the world): but those which labour to conforme their life to the obedience of God, so much as in regard of mans infirmitie they can. For so often as the Scripture speaketh of the righteousnesse of the faithfull, it is so farre off from excluding the forgiuenesse of sinnes, that rather it doth take the beginning from it. Neither indeede is it to be gathered from thence, that faith doeth leane vpon workes. For albeit that euerie one hath the witnesse of his faith, from workes: yet it followeth not that it is founded there, seeing that this latter proose is added for a signe. The assurance therefore of faith,

resteth

resteth in the alone grace of Christ: but godlinesse and holinesse of life discerneth true faith from a counterfaite & dead knowledge of God: because this truth is in Christ, as Paule saith, to haue put off the old man &c.

4 He that saith, I know him. Whereby proueth he that they lye, which boast of faith without godlinesse? Merely by the contrarie: because he had alredy proued, that the knowledge of God is an effectuall thing. For God is not knowen by a bare imaginatiō: but when by his spirit he inwardly vnsolueth himselfe knowen in our harts. But because that many hypocrits do vainly pamper themselues with the title of faith, the Apostle doth conuince such of a lie. For that which he sayth should be superfluous, except the false & vaine profession of Christianitie did rule in the mouths of many.

5 But he that kepeth. Now he sheweth which is the true obseruing of the law of God: that is to wit, to loue god. This place in my iudgment, is euill expounded of them, which vnderstand that they truely please God, which keepe his word. Rather expound it thus: To loue God with a sincere affection of hart, is to keepe his commaundements. For briefly, as I haue touched alreadie, his purpose was to

sheth what god doth require of vs. The same also did Moses saye, when he gathered the summe of the lawe, Deut. 10. Now Israel, &c. For ỳ lawe which is spiritual, doth not onely giue commandement of eternal things: but chiefly it doth cõmend vnto vs this, ỳ we loue God w̃ our whole hart. Because ỳ here is no mention made of men, it is not to be take for an absurd thing. For brotherly loue doth alwaies issue frõ ỳ loue of God: as afterwards we shall see. Whosoeuer therefore desireth to approue his life vnto God, let him direct all ỳ parts therof to this end. If any obiect, ỳ there was neuer any man found, ỳ so perfectly loued god. I answere, ỳ it sufficeth, so ỳ euery one for ỳ meisure of the grace ỳ is giuen him, do aspire vnto this perfection. In the meane time ỳ definitiõ is manifest, ỳ the perfect loue of God, is the due obseruing of his word.

We know that in him. He cõmeth again to ỳ fruit of ỳ gospell, wherof he had made mẽtion: that is felowship with God and with his son. And so he cõfirmeth ỳ former sentẽce, by things ỳ folow. For if ỳ end of ỳ gospel be, ỳ we may haue felowship w̃ god: & ther cã be no felowship w̃out loue: no mã cã truly profit in faith, but he ỳ cleueth to god frõ his hart.

6 He that saith he abideth in him. As before

he

he proposed vnto vs ỹ light of God as a pattern to folow: now also he calleth vs to thrift, ỹ we may becõe folowers of him. Yet he doth not simply exhort to ỹ imitatiõ of Christ: but by ỹ vnitie which we haue w̃ him, he proueth that we ought to be like him. The likenes of life & works he saith wil proue vs to abide in Christ. Further by these words he maketh himselfe an entrance vnto ỹ loue of our brethren, which he will immediately adde.

7 Brethrẽ, I write no new cõmãdemẽt to you: but an old cõmandemẽt, which you haue had frõ the beginning: this old cõmandemẽt is that word, which ye haue hard frõ the beginning.

8 Againe, a new commandement write I vnto you, which is the truth in him, and also in you: for the darknesse is past, and that true light now shineth.

9 He that saith he is in that light, & hateth his brother is in darknesse vntill this time.

10 He that loueth his brother abideth in that light, & there is none occasion of euil in him.

11 But he that hateth his brother, is in darknesse, & walketh in darknesse & knoweth not whether he goeth, because that darknes hath blinded his eyes.

7 AN exposition of the former doctrine, that is, that to loue God is

to kéep his commandements. And he doth not with mo wordes tarie in this without cause. First we know that newnes is alwaies hated or suspected. Then we do not easely take vp an vnwonted worke. Moreouer, when wee haue imbraced some certain kind of doctrine, it is grieuous vnto vs, ỹ any thing therin be changed or innouated. For these causes Iohn sheweth, ỹ he techeth nothing of loue, but that which ỹ faithful hauing heard from the very beginning, hath waxed old in ỹ verie vse. Others do expound oldnes otherwise: that is, that Christ prescribeth now no other rule of life in the gospel, then god did once vnder the law: & that is most true. Neither do I gainsay, but in this sense a little after, he calleth the word of the gospell, ỹ old cõmandement. But now I take it, that he meaneth onelye this, That these are ỹ first rudiments of the gospel: ỹ they haue ben so trained from ỹ beginning, ỹ there is no cause why they shuld shun ỹ as vnwonted, wherewith they ought to haue ben indued lõg ago. For it is, plain ỹ ỹ relatiue is put in ỹ place of ỹ cause. Therefore he calleth it Old, not because before many worldes it was deliuered to the fathers: but wherin they wer instructed immediatly from their first entraunce of Religion.

And

And that auaileth much to the confirmation of faith, because the readers ought to take it to haue proceeded from the same Christ, of whom they haue the Gospell.

The olde commandement is. It is probable that the name of oldnesse in this place is extended further. For the speach is more full when he saith. The woorde which you heard from the beginning, is that old commandement. And verily in my iudgement, it signifieth that the gospell ought not to be taken as a doctrine newlye sprong vp, but which came out from God, and is his eternal truth. As if he should haue sayde, ye ought not to measure the antiquitie of the Gospell by the space of time, wherin it is brought vnto you, for therein is manifested vnto you the eternall will of God. God therefore did not giue vnto you this rule of godlye lyfe, when you were first called to the faith of Christ, but the same was alwayes firme and approued with him. And indeede this finally ought to be accounted antiquitie, and deserueth account and reuerence, which hath his beginning of God. For the counterfait deuises of men, by how long prescription of yeares so euer, haue not so much authoritie, that they shuld ouerthrow the truth of God.

8 Againe, a new cõmandemẽt. The interp
ters seeme to me, not to haue vnderstood ẏ
postles mind, for he calleth ẏ New, which g
by instruction doth as it were dayly renew,
ẏ faithful may all their life long exercise th
selues therin, because they cã require nothin
more excellent. For ẏ beginnings which chi
drẽ learne, afterwards giue place to higher
more soũd doctrine. Cõtrarily, Iohn denieth
the doctrine of louing ẏ brethren is such, ẏ i
time wareth out of vse: but ẏ it doth perpetu
ally flourish, that the highest perfection be no
lesse then the first entrance. Further, this wa
needful to be added, because as men are mor
curious thẽ is meet, a great part do euer grẽ
dily desire some new thing. Hence commeth
irkesomnes of true doctrine, ẏ it begetteth in
finit wõders of errors, whilst euerie one gap
eth a fresh after new quiddities. But where
this is once set down, ẏ the Lord procedeth in
one maner, ẏ in all our life he may hold vs in
ẏ which we haue lerned: ther is giuẽ a bridle
to such desires: therfore who so desireth to rech
to ẏ point of wisdõe, because it belõgeth to ẏ
right gouernmẽt of life, let him profit in loue.

Which is the truth. He proueth that
which he hath sayd by reason: because in this
one commandement of loue, which belongeth

to

to ỹ direction of life, the whole truth of Christ both consist. Further, what other more great reuelation is to be waited for? For Christ is in truth the end & accõplishment of al things, therefore the name of truth hath regard vnto this, that they rest as in ỹ point. For it is taken for the fulnesse or absolute estate. He ioyneth Christ vnto them, as the head to ỹ members. As if he should haue sayd, that the body of the church hath no other perfection, or that they shall be soundly knit vnto Christ, if al holy loue do mutually flourish among themselues. Others expounde it otherwise. That which is truth in Christ, is also in you. But I see not to what end it serueth.

8 Because the darknesse is past. He putteth the time present in place of the time past. For he noteth that as soone as Christ hath shined, we haue the brightnesse of vnderstanding, not ỹ euery of ỹ faithfull vnderstandeth ỹ first daie so much as he ought. For Paul also Phi. 3. 11. saith, ỹ he laboreth to apprehẽd ỹ which yet he hath not attained vnto, but because ỹ knowledge of Christ is sufficient to expell darknesse, therfore daily goinges forward are necessarye, and euerye ones faith hath first a beginning before it come to perfection. But because GOD continueth the tenour of the

same

same doctrine, wherein he biddeth vs to increase: the knowledge of the Gospell is worthely called the true light, where Christ the sonne of righteousnesse doth shine. So ỹ way is shut vp to the malepeartnesse of men, who indeauour to corrupte the purenesse of the Gospell with their owne counterfait inuentions: and with good warrantise it is lawfull to condempne with most bitter cursing the whole Popish diuinitie, which doth wholy darken this true light.

9 He that saith he is in the light. He doth prosecute his Metaphor. He hath sayd ỹ loue is the onely rule, whereby our lyfe must bee squared: he hath sayde that this lawe is appointed to vs in the Gospell. Finally he hath sayd that there is as it were the none lyght, which ought to continue our eyes in the beholding thereof. Now of the contrarie he gathereth, that they are all blinde and doe erre in darknesse, which are strangers from loue. And whereas he first set downe the loue in God, and nowe of brethren, there is no more repugnaunce then betwixt the effect and the cause. Finally, they are so knit together of themselues, that they cannot bee separated. Iohn will after saie in the third chapter, that we doe falsely boast of the loue of God, except

wee

wée loue the brethren. And that is most true. But now he taketh the loue to our brethren as a testimonie whereby we proue that wée loue God. In summe, séeing loue doth so respect God, that in God it comprehẽdeth men: there is no absurditie in that, that the Apostle disputing of loue, doth referre it indifferently, sometimes to God, and sometimes to the brethren. And this is a common vse of the Scripture. Often times the whole perfection of life is placed in the loue of God. Againe, Paule Rom. 13. 8. teacheth, that he fulfilleth ẏ lawe which loueth his brother. And Christ sheweth ẏ these are ẏ principal things of the lawe, Righteousnesse, iudgement, and truth. Mat. 23. 23. And both is true, and doth most fitly agrée, because both the loue God directeth vs to ẏ loue of men, & we do indeed witnesse our diuine affection towards god by louing of men at his commandement. Whatsoeuer it be, let this euer remaine firme, that loue is the rule of the direction of lyfe, which is so much the more diligently to be marked, because all almost do rather chose any thing, then this onely commandement of God. To the same effect belongeth that which followeth, That ther is no offence, where is the desire of loue, for he that so frameth his life shal

neuer

neuer offend.

11 He that hateth his brother. Againe, he admonisheth, that although thou make an excellent shew of vertue, yet there is nothing y is not filthie where loue is absent. Conferre this place with the 13. of the 1. Cor. and it shall need no long exposition. But this doctrine is therefore obscure to the worlde, because the greater part are astonished with I know not what mas kes. So a counterfait holynesse almost dazeleth all their eies. In ỹ meane time loue is neglected, or else is reiected into some extreame corner.

12 I write to you little children, because your sinnes are forgiuen you for his names sake.

13 I write to you Fathers: because you haue knowen him which is from the beginning: I write vnto you young men, because you haue ouercome that wicked one.

14 I write vnto you children, because you haue knowen the Father. I haue written to you Fathers, because you haue knowen him which is from the beginning. I haue written vnto you young men, because you are strong, and the worde of God doeth a-

ide in you, and you haue ouercome that euill one.

12 LIttle children. This yet is a generall Sentence. And hée doeth not speake to them of young yeares, but generallye hée vnderstandeth by lyttle Children, men of all ages: as it is noted in the first Chapter, and in this also a lyttle after. This I saye because sundrie Interpreters doe verye ill to restraine it to children. But Iohn when hée will speake of Children, hée will call them [Paidia] that is, By Infancie: which name agréeth to the age. But hée as a spirituall Father calleth olde men as well as Children [Tecnia] by the name of lyttle Children. Immediatlye indéede hée will applye seuerall sentences to euerye age. Yet they are not a lyttle deceiued which doe beginne from hence. But rather least the former exhortation, might altogether darken the frée forgiuenesse of sinnes; this Doctrine which is proper to Faith, hée doeth vrge agayne: As in déede this foundation ought alwayes stedfastlye to bée kepte, that eternall lyfe is layde vp for vs thorough the onelye grace of Iesus Christe. Holynesse of lyfe in-

déede

deede must be vrged, the feare of God must be diligently taught, men must be vehemently prouoked to repentaunce, the newnes of lyfe with his fruits must be commended, yet this must alwayes bee taken heede off, that the doctrine of Faith be not strangled, which approueth Christ the alone author of saluation, & of all good things: but rather is this meane to be kept, that faith maye alwaies holde the chiefe place. Iohn doth prescribe vs this order, when he hath diligentlye preached of good workes, leaste yet more should seeme to be attributed to them then is meet, he doth so carefully recall vs to the grace of Christ.

Your sinnes are forgiuen you. Without this truste the appearaunce of holinesse will be nothing else but inconstaunt and vaine. Yea, they that setting aside the forgiuenesse of sinnes, doe rest in other duties, doe builde without a foundation. In the meane time Iohn doth teach, ỳ there is nothing more fit to stirre men vp to the feare of GOD, then while they are truely taught what good they haue receiued by Christ, as Paul Ph. 2. 1. doth beseech them by the bowells of the mercie of God: By which appeareth how lewd is that slaunder of the Papistes, who saye, that the desire of well doing wareth colde, while that

is extolled, which only maketh obedient children to God. For thence he taketh occasion to exhort, because we know that God is so louing vnto vs, that he doeth not impute our sinnes vnto vs.

For his name. The materiall cause is assigned, least we should seele other meanes to reconcile vs to God. For it wil not be inough to hold, that God forgiueth our sinnes, except we come rightly to Christ, and to that price which he paid for vs vpon the crosse. And that is so much the more to be obserued, because we see this waie stopped vp by the crafte of Sathan and vile inuentions of men: While foolish men go about to please God by diuers satisfactions, and inuent innumerable kinds of reconcilements to redeeme thē selues. For how many meanes we bring in before God to deserue pardon, by so many stoppes are we driuen from his presence. Therfore Iohn not content with this simple Doctrine, that God forgiueth vs our sins, addeth by name, that he is fauourable to vs in respect of Christ, that hee maye shutte out all other meanes. And that we may inioye this benefit, it is of necessitie also that we passe by and forget al other meanes, and imbrace only the name of Christ.

I write to you Fathers. Now he commeth to the reckoning vp of the ages, that he may shew that that he teacheth agréeth to euerie one. For generall speech doth sometimes affect ỹ lesse: yea, which is our vntowardnesse, ther are but few which think that ỹ belõgeth to them, that together is directed to all. Olde men for the most parte withdrawe themselues, as if they were to olde to learne. Children as if they were not of ripe age, refuse to heare: Men of middle age, because they are busied with other matters, they doe not héereto giue their minde. Therefore least anie shoulde disburthen himselfe, hée applyeth the Gospell to euerie ones vse. And hée setteth downe thrée ages: which pertition of the lyfe of man is most vsually receyued.

From whence also that famous song of the Lacedemonians had thrée degrées: whereof the first song, That you are wée shall be: the last, That which you are we haue béene: but the middle sorte, Wée are that which the one haue béene, and the other shall bée. Iohn doth distribute the course of mannes lyfe into these thrée degrées, and hée beginneth with olde men: and sayth that the Gospell doeth

belong to them, because thence they maye learne to knowe the eternall sonne of God. The waywardnesse of olde men is knowen: and especially because they measure wisedome by the number of yeares, they are made vnapt to be taught.

Furthermore, this lewdenesse Horace in the booke of the art of Poetrie, doeth worthely note in them, that praising the time of their youth, they despise whatsoeuer is done or sayd. Iohn doth wisely remedie this euill, when he sayth, that in the Gospell is contayned not onely olde wisedome, but that which bringeth vs to the verie eternitie of GOD. Whereon it followeth, that there is nothing heere which they may disdaine. Whereas he saith, that Christ was from the beginning. I refer it as wel to his diuine presence, wherein he is coeternal with the Father, as to that power whereof the Apostle speaketh to the Hebrues. 13.8. Where he saith he was yesterday as he is to day. As if he had sayd: If oldnesse doe like you, you haue Christ, who excedeth all antiquitie. Wherefore bee not ashamed to bee his Disciples, who comprehendeth all worldes in himselfe. In the meane time is to bee noted, which is indeede the olde Religion, verily euen that which is

grounded in Iesus Christ. For otherwise neuer so long a course of yeares shall be little worth, if it take the beginning from error. I write to you young men. Albeit he vseth a diminitiue [Neaniscoi] young men. Yet there is no doubt but he directeth his speech to all men, which are in the good state and flowre of their yeares. We knowe further, that that age is so addicted to the vaine cares of the world, that it thinketh little of the kingdome of God. For ỹ sharpnesse of wit and strength of bodie, doe as it were make them dronke: Therefore the Apostle doeth admonish them, where true strength doth consist, least according to their manner they boast in the flesh.

Now saith he, Are strong, because you haue ouercome Sathan. For the note of coupling is of equall force, as a particular causal, and indeede it is that valiancie which men ought greatly to desire: that is to saye, a spirituall. And together he sheweth that it is no other where had, then of Christ. For he putteth in minde of those good things which we receiue by the Gospell. He saith they haue vanquished which are yet in the verie act of warre: But our estate is farre other, then these that were vnder the standard of men. For the battaile is doubtfull to them, and the issue

is

is vncertaine. We are already conquerours before we buckle with ỹ enimie, because our head Christ hath alreadye vanquished for vs the whole world.

14 I write to you children, Children néd the gouernment of another, therefore the Apostle doth gather, that the gospell doth most fitly agree with children, because there they maye finde the father. Now we se how diuellishe the tyrannie of the Pope is, which tyrannously driueth all ages from the doctrine of ỹ gospell, which the spirit of God doth so prouoke them vnto. But these things which the Apostle hath sorted into specialls, are indeed generalls. For we all flow out into vanitie and come to nothing, except our strength do leane vpon the eternall truth of God. There is nothing more fraile & fleeting then we, vnlesse ỹ power of Christ dwel in vs: we are all childrē vntil we come to the grace of adoption by the Gospell. What therefore he saith of children, is also common to olde men: but yet he will applie to euerie one ỹ which is most necessarie for them, that he maye shewe that all without exception stande in néede of the doctrine of the Gospell. The note [Oti] Because, may bee two wayes expounded: but this sence which I haue giuen is much

better: and also will better agrée with the Text. I haue written vnto you. I take these repetitions to bée superfluous. And it is probable, that vnskilfull Readers thinking otherwise then it was, that hée spake twice of children, haue rashlye added other two partes. Albeit it may bée, that Iohn himselfe inserted the second time, the speech of young men for increase, for there he addeth, that they were strong: which he sayde not before, but they would vnaduisedly make worke for the writer.

15 Loue not the world, nor those thinges that are in the worlde: If anie man loue the world, the loue of the Father is not him.

16 Because whatsoeuer is in the worlde, (as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of lyfe) are not of the Father, but of the world.

17 And this world passeth awaie and the lusts thereof: but hee that fulfilleth the will of God, abideth for euer.

15 Ye had sayd before ỹ this was the onely way to liue godly, To loue God: but because bëing occupied in the vaine delighte of this world,

worlde, wee tourne all our sences to another end: this vanitie must first be plucked from vs, that the loue of GOD may raigne in vs. Untill our mindes be purged, the former doctrine maye be repeated an hundreth times without profite. No otherwise, then if powring water vppon a round globe, thou shalt not gather so much as one droppe, because there is no voyde place where the water may be kept. By the name of the World, vnderstande whatsoeuer belongeth to this present lyfe, when it is separate from the kingdome of God, and the hope of eternall lyfe. So it doeth comprehend in it selfe all kinde of corruption, and deapth of all naughtinesse and euills. In the worlde are pleasures, delights, and all inticements wherewith man may bee snared, to withdrawe himselfe from GOD. Furthermore, the loue of the worlde is so vehementlye condemned: because when wee regarde nothing but the earth, it is of necessitie, that we both forget God and our selues. And where such wicked desire doeth raigne and beare the swaie, and holdeth a man so snared, that he doeth not meditate of the heauenlye lyfe, there is a beastlye senselessnesse.

If anie man loue the world. Hee proueth

by an argument of contraries how necessarie it is to cast awaie the loue of the world, if we wil please God. And that he doth afterwards confirme by an argument of repugnaunces: because those thinges which be proper to the world be vtterly at warre with God. That must be kept in minde which I sayd already, that heere is noted a prophane disposition of life, which hath no fellowshippe with the kingdome of God: where men so growe out of kinde, that being satisfied with this present lyfe, they thinke no more of the immortall life then bruite beastes. Therefore whosoeuer doeth so inbondage himselfe to earthlye desires, he cannot be the childe of God.

16 That is, the lust of the flesh. The olde interpreter saith otherwise. For of one sentence he maketh two. The Grecians haue done better, which read together in one sentence, That whatsoeuer is of the worlde is not of God: and in one continued speech are sette downe three kindes of concupiscences. For in stede of explication, Iohn hath put in these as it were three examples, that hee might briefly shew what indeauours, & what kinde of thoughts they haue, which liue to the world.

Fur-

Fyrther it is no great matter, whether it be a full and whole partition. Albeit thou shalt not finde a worldly man, in whom these desires do not raigne, or at the least some one of them.

It remaineth that we see, what he meaneth by each of them. The first part vseth to be expounded generally of al wicked desires: because ỹ flesh signifieth ỹ whole corrupt nature of man. Albeit I wold not contend, yet I will not dissemble, that I approue of another sence. When Paule forbiddeth, Rom. 13.14. that there should be thought taken for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it. Ye seemeth to me a good interpreter of this place. What is flesh there: verily the bodie and his increasings. What then is the desire of ỹ flesh, but when earthly minded men, desiring to liue at ease and daintely, are onely giuen ouer to their profit: The threefolde partition of an Epicure is knowen by Cicero and others, whereby he discerneth between desires: when he maketh some natural & necessarie: others naturall, yet not necessarie: others, neither naturall nor necessarie. But Iohn, who knew the disorder of mans heart, doth safely condemne the lusts of ỹ flesh, because it alwaies intemperately breaketh out & will not keepe

a meane. Afterwards he ascendeth by degrees to the groser faults: The lust of the eyes, in my iudgement comprehendeth as well vnchast lokes, as the vanitie which rangeth in pompe and vaine brauery. There followeth lastly arrogancie or pride, whereto is ioyned ambition, bragging, contempt of others, a blind loue of it selfe, and a rash presumption. The summe is, that so soone as the world offereth it selfe, our desires, as our hart is wicked, like vnbridled beasts, are violently drawen thether: so that diuers lustes do beare sway, which al are contrarie to God. For life it is in Greeke [Bios,] that is the kinde and manner of liuing.

17 But the world passeth away. Because in the world there is nothing but inconstant and as it were for a short time: he thereof gathereth how euill and miserably they prouide for themselues, who set their felicitie heere: especially seeing God doth cal vs to the blessed glorie of eternall life: as if he should haue sayd, the true felicitie which God offereth to his children, is eternall. It is therefore an vnworthie thing, that we should be intangled with the worlde, which will shortly vanish away with all his good things.

Con-

Concupiscence, I interpret heere by a Metonimia, whatsoeuer is desired, and inforceth the desires of men vnto it selfe. The sense is, that whatsoeuer in the worlde is helde most precious, and chiefly to be desired, it is but a vaine shadow. When he saith, that they abide for euer that do the will of God: he signifieth that they shall euer be happie, that labour to aspire vnto God.

If any man obiect, that no man doth that which God commaundeth: the aunswere is easie, that it is not meant heere of ỹ absolute performance of the lawe, but of the obedience of Faith, which howsoeuer it be not perfect, yet it is neuertheless approued with God. The will of God is first showed vnto vs in the Lawe: but because no man doth satisfie the Lawe, no happines can be hoped for from thence. But Christ meeteth those that bee without hope, with a newe supplye, who not onely doth regenerate vs with his Spirite, that wee maye giue obedience and reuerence to GOD: but causeth allso that our indeauour howsoeuer it be weake, obtaineth the commendation of absolute righteousnesse.

18 Little children it is the last time, and

and as you haue heard that Antichrist sha
come, euen now also there begin to bee mani
Antichrists, whereby wee knowe that it is th
last time.

19 They went out from amongst vs, bu
they were not of vs. For if they had ben of v
they would verely haue tarried with vs: bu
that it might haue bene made manifest, tha
they were not all of vs.

18 IT is the last time. He confirmeth
the faithful against offences wher
with they might haue bene troubled. Now
were sprong vp diuers sectes, which did cu
a sunder the vnitie of faith, and disperse the
Churches. And ỹ Apostle doth not only fence
the faithfull, least they should stumble: but
turneth all this into another ende. For ha
doth admonish them that the last time is at
hand, and therefore he exhorteth them to the
greater watchfulnesse, as if he should haue
saide. When diuers errours sprung vp, you
ought rather to be awakened then ouerwhel
med. For there is to be gathered, that Christ
is not farre hence. Therefore let vs be dili
gent to waite for him, least he take vs at a
sodaine. We ought at this day to be stirred
vp in like manner: and to lay hold by faith

of

the comming of Christ which is at hande, when Satan setteth all out of order, to disturbe the Church. For these are signes of the last time. But so many yeres which haue passed since the death of Iohn, do seeme to conuince this prophecie of vntruth. I aunswere that the Apostle doth shew to the faithful according to the vsuall manner of the Scripture, that there is nothing remaineth further to be loked for, but that Christ appeare for the redemption of the world. But because he setteth no certaine time: he neither fed the men of his time with vaine hope, neither would he cut off the course of the Church in time to come, nor ỹ succession of many yeres, wherein the Church hath continued in the world vnto this day.

And indeede if the eternitie of gods kingdome were alwayes before our eyes, there will be no such long time, which would not be like to a verie moment. We must regard the purpose of ỹ Apostle, because he calleth that the last time, wherein al things are so fulfilled, that there remaineth, but the last reuealing of Christ.

You haue heard that Antechrist. He speketh as of a thing knowen. Whence it is easie to gather, that the faithfull wer taught and

and admonyshed from the beginning
the dissipation of the Church which was
come: both that they might carefullye kee
themselues in the faith which they haue re
ceiued, and also that they might instruct the
posteritie to beware. For so God would hau
the Church to be tried, that none shoulde be
deceiued, except wittinglye and willinglye,
and that there shoulde be no excuse of igno
raunce. But we see the whole worlde almos
so haue bene miserably deceiued, as if there
had neuer bene word spoken of Antichrist.
Furthermore, in the Popedome, there is no
thing more of account and vsuall, then that
Antichrist shall come. In the meane time
they are so besotted, that they espie not his ty
rannie that is yoaked vnto their necks. The
same thing in truth is come vnto them, that
was vnto the Iewes. For albeit they holde
the promises of the Messiah, yet are they fur
ther off from Christ, then if they had neuer
heard of his name: for the imagined Messi
ah which they haue fained to themselues,
hath vtterly tourned them awaye from the
sonne of God. And if any by the Lawe and
the prophets go about to bring them to the
knowledge of Christ, he shal do nothing but
lose his labour. The Papistes imagine an

Anti

Antichrist, which shall vexe the Church for three yeares and a halfe. All the notes wherby ỳ spirit of God doth point out Antichrist, do euidently appeare in the Pope: but that three yeares Antichrist doth hold the foolish Papists occupied, least in seeing they should see. Let vs remember therefore, that the spirit of God did not onely shewe that Antichrist should come, but together sette downe sure markes, by which he might be knowen.

Yea, euen now there are many. This maye seeme to be added in stéd of a correction: as if they vntruly supposed ỳ they should be some one kingdome: but it is not so. They ỳ think that ther shalbe one only man, they are gretly deceiued. But Paul whē he maketh mētiō of ỳ falling away to come, doth plainely witnes, that ther shall be a certain bodie & kingdome. 2. The. 2. 3. First he foretelleth ỳ falling awaye, which shall spred it selfe ouer all the church, ỳ it may be as it wer a general euil: then he assigneth ỳ general head of ỳ Apostacie to be ỳ aduersary of Christ: which shal sit in ỳ temple of god, vsurping diuine honor to himself. Except we will be blind of purpose, we may learne by this discription of Paul to know Antichrist, which I haue expoūded in his place: now it sufficeth to touch it a little.

But

But how shall this agrée with the words of Iohn, who saith, that there are now manie? I aunswere, that Iohn meaneth nothing els, then that seuerall sects begin to arise, which were forerunners of the falling away. For Cherinthus, Basilides, Martion, Valentinus, Ebion, Arrius, and the rest, were members of that Kingdome, which the diuell afterward set vp against Christ. To speake properly, Antichrist indéede was not yet come, but the mysterie of his impietie did priuelye worke. 2. The. 2. 7. But Iohn vseth this name, that he might the more stirre vp the indeauour and care of the godly, to beate backe their falshoods. But if the spirit of God commaund the faithfull euen then to watch continually, when they did onely sée a farre off the signes of ỹ enimie to come: much lesse is it now a time of sléeping, when he oppresseth the Church with most cruell tyrannie, and doth openly set himselfe against Christ.

19 They went out from among vs. Hé preuenteth another obiection, that ỹ Church did séeme to haue begotten those mischiefes, and for a time nourished them in her bosome. For in truth it is of more force to trouble the weake, if any one who hath professed one faith with vs do fall away, then

if

if a thousand that are without should conspire against vs. He therefore so confesseth that they came out of the bosome of the Church, that he yet denieth, that they were euer of the Church. Further the way to deduce the obiection, is, that the Church is alwaies subiect to this euill, that is, constrained to beare manye hypocrites, which in truth haue not Christ, howsoeuer w̄ their mouth they professe his name for a time. When he saith, They went out from vs, he signifieth ý they did first occupie a rome in the Church, and were accompted in the number of the godly. Yet he denieth that they were of vs, because they did falsly pretend the name of ý faithfull, euen as chaffe albeit it is mingled with wheate in one floore, yet is not accompted to be of the wheate.

If they had bene of vs. He doth openly pronounce that they wer neuer members of the church which fall away. And in truth the seale of God vnder which he kéepeth his, remaineth sure, as Paul saith. 2. Tim. 2. 19. But héere ariseth an hard thing: For it often falleth out, that manye who séemed to haue imbraced Christ, do fall awaye. I answere, that there are thrée sorts of them that professe Christ. For there are, which do but

counterfaite godlyneſſe, while yet an euill conſcience doth inwardly conuince them. The hypocriſie of others is moꝛe deceiptfull, which doo not onelye indeauour to make a vaine ſhewe beforꝛe men, but ſhut their eyes, that they maye ſeeme to themſelues to woꝛſhippe GOD aright. The thirde haue a liuely roote of Faith, and they carrie in their hearts firmely grounded, a witneſſe of their adoption.

The two firſt degrées haue not any thing of aſſurance, of the laſt Iohn ſpeaketh when hée ſaith, it is not poſſible they ſhoulde be alienated from the Church: noꝛ can the ſeale which God hath impꝛinted in their heartes, bée taken awaye. The incoꝛruptible ſéede, that hath taken roote, can not bée plucked vp noꝛ aboliſhed. And héere the queſtion is not of the conſtancie of men, but of the conſtancie of GOD, whoſe election muſt néedes bée ſure. Wherefoꝛe hée ſayeth not without cauſe, where the callyng of GOD is effectuall, that there is a ſure perſeueraunce. In ſumme he meaneth that they were neuer rightly indued with ỹ knowledge of Chꝛiſt, which fall away: but had onely a light and vncertaine taſt.

That they might be made knowen. Hée

sheweth that examination is necessarie and profitable for the Church. Whereupon it followeth on the contrarie, ỹ it is no iust cause to be troubled at. Seeing the Church is lyke vnto a flore, the chaffe must be fanned, that the wheate maye remaine pure. This doth GOD when hee thrusteth hypocrites out of the Church: for hee doth purge it from filth and vncleannesse.

20 And you haue an annoyntment from that holy one: and knowe all things.

21 I haue not written vnto you, because you knowe not the truth: but because you haue knowen it, and because no lye is of the truth.

22 Who is a lyer, but hee which denyeth that Iesus is Christ? This is Antichrist, which denyeth the Father and the Sonne.

23 Whosoeuer denieth the Sonne, the same hath not the Father.

THe Apostle doth modestly excuse it, that hee dide so carefully and diligently admonish them: least they should thinke themselues to bee ouerthwartlye rebuked, as

rude & ignorant of those things, which they ought very well to knowe. So Paul yeldeth wisedome to the Romanes, that they might be able and fit to admonish others. Rom. 15. 14. Yet together he sheweth that he could not otherwise performe the dutie that was inioyned him, except he did admonish them. And yet the Apostles do not flatteringlye speake so: but by this meanes they do wisely foresee, least their doctrine should be reiected of any sorts of men, while they shew that it agreeth and is profitable not onely to the rude people, but euen to those that be lerned in the Lords schole. Experience it selfe teacheth, how disdainfull the eares of men bee. Indeede such irksomnesse must be far from the godly: yet it is the parte of a good and wise teacher to let passe nothing, whereby he may make all willing to heare him. And it is certaine that we receiue with lesse heede & reuerence that which is spoken, if wee suppose that hee which speaketh, doth take from vs the knowledge which is giuen of the Lord.

The Apostle doth together sharpen the readers with this processe: because they haue the lesse excuse, which are indued with the gifte of vnderstanding, except they goe before others

others in profiting. The summe is, that the apostle doth not teach them as rude and such as learne but their principles, but he bringeth to their minde the things which they alreadie know: and then he exhorteth them to stirre vp the sparkes of the spirite, that the full brightnesse maye shine in them. And he expoundeth himselfe in the next words, denying that he wrote to them, therefore, because they knew not the truth, but because they were well instructed in it. For if they had bene ignorant and nouices, they could not haue vnderstood this doctrine, And wher as he saith, They know all things, it must not be vnderstode generally, but restrained to the circumstances of the present place.

But whereas he saith, they haue an annoynting of that Holy one. I doubt not but he alludeth to the olde Figures. For out of the Sanctuarie there was oyle taken to annoynt the Priests. But Daniel.7.24. sheweth that the comming of Christ is the proper time of annoynting with the holy of holiest. For therefore was he annoynted of his Father, that he might poure forth vppon vs, much plentie of his owne fulnesse.

Hence it followeth that men are not rightly wise by the sharpnesse of their owne

vnderstanding: but by the inlyghtening of the Spirite: and then that we are no waies made partakers of the Spirite but by Christ, who is the true Sanctuarie, and our alone high Priest.

21 And that no lye. Hée graunteth that they haue iudgement whereby they discerne truth from falshod. And this proposition is not Logicall, That a lye differeth from the truth, (as generall Rules are giuen in Scholes) but the speach is applyed to Vse and Practise. As if he should haue said, that they do not onelye holde that which is true, but are armed also, agaynst the subtiltyes and deceyptes of the wicked, that they maye wisely looke to themselues.

Further, hée speaketh not of one or two kinde of lyes: but whatsoeuer crafte Satan goeth about, or by what meane soeuer he set vpon them, that the wisedome to discerne lyght from darkenesse, was alwayes readye with them, because they are guyded by the Spirite.

22 Who is a lyer? Hée doth not affirme, that they onely are lyers, who denye that the Sonne of God is come in the flesh, leaste any shoulde beyonde measure disquiet him,

himselfe in dissoluing this doubte: but that they excéede all other. As if hée had sayde, Excepte this maye bée taken to bée a lye, that there cannot any other thing be taken so. As wée vse commonly to speake. If vnfaithfulnesse to GOD and men bée not a faulte, what els shall we call a faulte? And that which hée had generally touched of false prophets, hée nowe applyeth to the state of his owne time. For hée doth with the finger poynt them out which troubled the Church. Whereas the olde Writers thought, that Cherinthus and Carpocrates were noted out, I easelye receyue it. But the denying of Christ stretcheth farre. For it is not inough to confesse in one word that Iesus is Christ, except he be acknowledged to be such a one as hée is offered vnto vs of his Father in the Gospell.

Those two Heretykes whome I haue before named, gaue the title of Christ to the Sonne of God: but yet they vntruely helde him to bée onely man. As there are diuers others, as Arrius, who adorning him with the name of GOD, did neuertheless spoyle him of his eternall and omnipotent Diuinitie.

Martion dreamed that he was but the image of a man. Sabellius fayned that hée differed nothing from his Father. They all denyed him to bée the Sonne of God: because none of them did rightly know the whole Christ: but falsifyng his truth as much as in them was, they haue for Christ framed to themselues an Idoll. Then brake out Pelagius, who indéed moued no controuersie of the being of Christ, but graunted that hée was true God and man: but hée translated almost all his honour vnto vs. But this is to bring Christ to nothing, when his power & grace is abolished. So the Papists at this daye, setting frée will agaynst the grace of the holy Ghost, placing parte of our righteousnesse and saluation in the desarte of workes, fayning infinite Patrones to themselues, by whome they may haue God fauourable, they haue I wot not what counterfayte Christ: but the lyuely and naturall Image of God, which ought to shine in Christ, they deface with their wicked inuentions, they weaken his power, they ouerthrowe and peruert his office.

Now we sée ý Christ is denyed so often as those things ý are proper vnto him, are take from

from him. And as Christ is the end of ỹ lawe and the Gospell, and hath in himselfe all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge: so is he the verie marke that all Heretikes aime at, that thether they maye directe all their artillerie. Wherefore the Apostle doth not without cause make them the chiefe of all deceiuers, which fight against Christ, seeing that the full truth is set forth vnto vs in him.

This is Antichrist. He speaketh not of that Prince of falling away, which should sit in the seate of God: but hee putteth them in that wicked rabblement, whosoeuer striue to ouerturne Christ. And that he might increase their sinne, he sayth, that they denie no lesse the Father then the sonne: as if he shoulde haue sayd, That they haue no more religion, because they haue vtterlye cast awaie God, which he straight confirmeth by a reason added: because the Father cannot be separated from the son. And this is a sentence of excellent worthinesse, and deserueth to be accounted amongst the chiefe principles of our religion, yea, after we haue confessed that there is one God. This second point must necessarily bee adioyned. That hee is no other, but

which is knowen in Christ. Neither doth the Apostle heere cunningly dispute of the vnitie of beeing. It is certaine indeed that the sonne cannot bee separated awaie from the Father, because he is [Omoùsios] that is, One substaunce: but nowe there is another thing in hande: namely, that the Father who otherwise is inuisible, hath onelye made himselfe knowen in the son. Wherupon he is also called the image of the Father: because he doth represent and deliuer vnto vs whatsoeuer is profitable to be knowen of the father. For the alone maiestie of God doth alwayes darken our eyes with his infinit brightnesse. Therefore it is of necessitie that we looke vnto Christ. Heere is accesse to the light, which is otherwise worthely sayd to bee vnable to bee come vnto. I saie againe, that heere is not handled the exact disputation of the eternall beeing of Christ, which only he hath with the father. Indeed this place doth plentifully suffice to proue that: but Iohn calleth vs to the practise of faith, ỹ is, ỹ because God hath giuen himselfe wholy vnto vs to be ioyned in Christ, it is in vaine to seeke him els where. Or if anye desire more plainelye: because in Christ dwelleth all fulnesse of diuinitie, that

without

without him there is nothing of God. Wherevpon it followeth, ỹ the Turks, Iewes, & the like, haue for God a very Idoll. For wt what titles so euer they adorn their God whõ they worship: because yet they reiect him, without whom none can come to God, & in whom God hath wholy made himselfe knowen vnto vs: what haue they but their owne creature or counterfait? Let them flatter themselues as much as they wil in their fansies, ỹ reason of diuine matters without Christ: yet it is certaine they do nothing but play the fooles, because they hold not ỹ head, as Paul saith, Col. 2.19. Wherevppon it is easie to gather, how needfull the knowledge of Christ is.

Many bookes haue a sentence contrarie to this, He that confesseth the sonne, &c. But because I suppose it to be noted of some, rather to haue crept into the Text, I haue not feared to leaue it out. But if it séeme good to bée in, the meaning of it will be, that there is not anie other lawfull confession of GOD, then when the Father is acknowledged in his Sonne. If anie man obiect that many of those that were before thought rightly of God, who yet knew not of Christ. I grant ỹ the knowledge of Christ was not alwaies so reuealed, yet I doe affirme that

that

that was euer true: euen as the light of the Sunne is spread abroad vnto vs by beames, so the knowledge of God is not communicated but by Christ.

24 Therefore let that same abide in you which you haue heard from the beginning. If that shall remaine in you which you heard from the beginning, yee also shall continue in the Father and in the sonne.

25 And this is the promise which he promised vnto vs: euen eternall life.

26 These things I haue written to you of them that deceiue you.

27 And that annointing which you haue receiued of him remaineth in you: and ye haue no neede that anie man teach you: but as that same annointing teacheth you of all things, & it is the truth, and is not lying, and as it taught you, abide in him.

28 And now little children abide in him: that when he shal appeare we may haue boldnesse, and not be ashamed at his comming.

29 If ye knowe that he is righteous, know ye that he that doeth righteously is borne of him.

24 He coupleth an exhortation to the former

er doctrine: and to the end the exhortation
ay haue ỳ more effect, he sheweth the fruit,
hich they shall receiue by obedience. There-
e he exhorteth them to the constancye of
ith, that they keepe it firmelye grounded in
eir hearts which they haue learned. Fur-
er when he sayth, From the beginning, one-
antiquitie woulde not suffice to confirme
hatsoeuer doctrine: but because he hath now
ewed that they haue ben rightly instructed
the pure Gospell of Christ, hée concludeth,
hat they ought of right to continue in it. And
his order is to be well noted. For if we will
ot depart from that kinde of doctrine, which
we haue once receiued, of what sort so euer
the same be: it will not be constancie, but a
péeuishe frowardnesse. Wherefore there is
choice to be had, that the warrant of our faith
may appeare out of the word of God: then let
there followe an inflexible constancie. The
Papists bragge of their beginning, because
they haue dronke in their superstitions, euen
from their infancie. Under this pretence they
imbolden themselues contemptuouslye to
cast aside the plaine truth. Such an obstina-
cie ought alwaies to teach vs that wée must
alwayes beginne from the assuraunce of the
doctrine.

If

If it abide in you. This is the fruit of perseueraunce, that in whom ỹ truth of God abideth, they abide in God. Wherevpon we gather what is to be sought in al the doctrins of godlinesse. Wherfore he indeed hath excellitlie profited, who hath gone thus farre, that he cleaueth wholy vnto God. And in whome soeuer the father doth not dwell by the sonne, he is wholly vaine and vnprofitable, what knowledge soeuer he haue. Further, this is an excellent practise of sound doctrine, because it ioyneth vs to God, and we find in it whatsoeuer belongeth to the true inioying of God. In the last place he sheweth vs, that this is the chiefe happinesse if God dwell in vs. The speech that he vseth is doubtfull: either that this is the promise, whereby he hath promised vnto vs eternall lyfe: or appositiuelye, that this is the promise which he hath giuen vs, namely, eternall lyfe. Because yet that whether waye thou takest it, the meaning is all one: let the choyce bee free. The summe is, that there is no other waye for vs to lyue, then if wee nourishe continuallye to the end, the seede of life receiued in our mindes. Iohn is plentifull in setting downe this point, that not onely the beginning of an happie lyfe is placed in the knowledge of Christ, but also

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perfection. But no repeating of it can bee too much, seeing it is apparãt ỹ this hath alwaies ben ỹ cause of destruction to men, because not being contẽted wỏ Christ, they haue delighted to range beyond ỹ simple doctrine of ỹ gospel.

26 These things I haue written vnto you. The Apostle doth againe excuse it, that he admonisheth them, who otherwise had knowledge & iudgement. And this he doth that they may adioyne ỹ iudgement of the spirite, least ỹ admonition be fruitles. As if he shuld haue said, I doe those things that belong to me: but it is of necessitie in the meane time that the spirit of God doe guide you in al things. For in vaine shall I beat your eare, or rather the aire with the sounde of my voice, excepte hee speake within. When wee heare that hee hath written of deceyuers, let vs alwayes marke that this charge doeth euer lye vpon a good and painefull Pastour, not onelye that hee gather together the sheepe, but also that hee roote out and driue awaie all rauening Wolues. For what shall it auaile to sette abroade the pure voyce of the Gospell, if wee winke at the manifest deceites of Sathan. Therefore there is not anye man that canne faythfully teach the Church, except he binde himselfe to represse errours.

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if he see anie cast abroade of the deceiuers. Where he saith, the annointing Which yee haue receiued of him, I referre it to Christ.

27 Ye haue no neede. Iohn had bene to be laughed at, as I sayd before, if he had broched an vnprofitable doctrine. He doth not therefore ascribe vnto them so much knowledge, that he denie them to be Christes Schollers. He onely signifieth, that they are not so ignorant that they should be taught as of things vnknowen: and that he did not propound anie thing which the spirit of God did not readily prompt vnto them. Therefore mad men doe wickedly abuse this testimonie, that they might shutte out of the Church the vse of the outward ministrie. He saith that the faythfull are taught by the office of the spirite, to keepe those thinges that he deliuereth, that they haue no neede to learne them as things vnknowen. This he sayth to the ende that he may procure the more account to his doctrine: while euerie one findeth his subscription written in his heart with the finger of God. But, seeing that euerie one vnderstandeth according to the measure of faith, & that faith in some is small, in some meane, and in none absolute: hence it followeth that no man knoweth so much, but that there is yet

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place to further going forward. And then this is another profit of the doctrine, that where men hold fast that is meete, yet we warn thē and stir them vp, that thereby they may haue a greater increase.

For in that Iohn testifieth that they are taught in all things by the spirit, it must not be so generallye taken: but restrained to the circumstance of the present place. In summe, he meneth nothing else, but to confirme their faith, while he recalleth them to ỹ triāl of the spirit, who only is a fit examiner & approuer of the doctrine, while hee sealeth vp the same in our heartes, that we may know of a truth that God speaketh. For seeing ỹ faith ought to looke vnto God, he onely can be a witnesse vnto himselfe, ỹ he may perswade our hearts that ỹ proceedeth from him which our eares receiue. And that is the meaning of those wordes, As it teacheth you and is the truth. That is, that the spirite is like a seale, whereby is witnessed vnto vs the truth of GOD. Where he addeth, It is not a lye. This perticular noteth out the other office of the spirit, namely, that he gouerneth vs by iudgement and discreation, least wee bee deceiued with a lye: least wee depende vncertaine and in doubt, least wee shoulde bee as it were neuer

in vncertaine things.

As he hath taught you, continue. He had sayd ỹ the spirite remained in them: Now he exhorteth that they remaine in his reuealation. And he noteth out the manner of the Reuealation. Abide, saith he, in Christ, as the spirit hath taught you. I know it is commonly otherwise expounded, Abide in it: that it may note out the annointing. But seeing the repetition which by and by followeth, can agree to none but vnto Christ. I doubt not but here also he speaketh of Christ: and the course of the Text doth require the same. For the Apostle tarryeth in that point, that the faythfull would keepe sure the pure knowledge of Christ, and that they striue not anie other waye to come to God. In the meane time he doth clearely shew, that the children of God are lightened of the spirit to no other ende, but that they maye knowe Christ. But if they shall not decline from thence, he setteth forth the fruites of perseueraunce: namely, that they shall haue assuraunce not to be ashamed at his presence. For faith is not a naked & cold apprehending of Christ, but a liuely & effectuall feeling of his power, which begetteth assurance. Neither indeede could faith otherwise stand out, while it is daily assailed

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with so many tẽpests, except it did both looke to ẏ cõming of Christ, & being vpholdẽ by his power, did bring a quiet state to ẏ consciẽces. Further, ẏ nature of cõfidẽce is most fitly exprest, whẽ he saith: ẏ presence of Christ shal be borne wõut feare, for they ẏ securely flatter thẽselues in sin: turne their back vpon God: & find peace no where els, but in ẏ forgetfulnes of God. This is ẏ securitie of ẏ flesh ẏ beslotteth men: ẏ being turned from God, they neither loath sin, nor feare death: in ẏ mene time they shun ẏ iudgement of Christ: but an holy trust disposeth it selfe into the alone sight of God. Whereof it is ẏ the godly do cheerfully looke for Christ, and feare not to behold him.

29 If you know that he is righteous. Hee againe procedeth to exhortations: that he may after ioyne them in the whole Epistle to the doctrine. By many reasons he proueth ẏ faith must of necessitie be ioyned with an holy and a cleane life. The first is, that we are spiritually begotten into the similitude of Christ. Wherevpon it followeth that no man is begotten of Christ, but he that liueth righteously. Albeit it is vncertaine whether hee meane Christ or God, when he saith, ẏ they which work righteousnes are begottẽ of him. Indeede it is an vsuall kind of speaking in

the Scriptures, that we are begotten of God in Christ, but this other also, there is an absurditie, that they are begotten of Christ who are renewed by his spirit.

Chap. 3.

1 BEhold what loue the Father hath giuen vs, that we should bee called the sonnes of God. Therefore the world knoweth vs not, because it knoweth not him.

2 Beloued, nowe wee are the sonnes of God, and yet it hath not appeared what wee shall bee: But wee knowe that when hee shall appeare, wee shall bee lyke vnto him, because wee shall see him euen as he is.

3 And euerie one that hath this loue in him, puryfieth himselfe, euen as hee is pure.

THE second Argument is from the dignitie and excellencie of our calling. Our heauenlye Father sayth hee hath vouchsafed to dignifie vs with no small honour, seeing hee hath adopted vs to bee his sonnes. This so greate fauour ought to kindle in

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vs the studie of godlynesse, that wee maye bee lyke vnto him: and it canne no other way be done, except he which confesseth himselfe to bee one of the sonnes of GOD, doe purifie himselfe. And the more vehement the exhortation is, the more is set forth vnto vs the grace of almightie God. For whereas he sayth that loue is giuen vs, hee sheweth that this commeth of meere liberalitie, that God accepteth vs for his children. For whence become we of such account, but by the loue of God? Furthermore, his free loue is heere manifestlye spoken of. It is indeede an vnproper kinde of speech, but the Apostle had rather speake vnproperlye, then not to expresse that which was of necessitie to bee knowen. Briefelye, hee signifieth that the more plentifull the loue of GOD is shewed vppon vs, the more wee are bound vnto him, as Paule to the Romanes the 12.1. beseecheth the Romanes by the mercies of God, that they would offer themselues vnto him an holye Sacrifice. In the meane time we are taught, that as I sayde the adoption of all the godlye is free, and dependeth not vppon anie respect of workes. For that which the Schole men say, that they are adopted whom god did foresee to be worthie, is plainelye made of none ef-

fect by theſe wordes. For by this meanes the gift of God ſhould not haue bene free: This chiefe point of doctrine is principally needfull to holde. For ſeeing that the onely cauſe of our ſaluation is adoption, and that the Apoſtle witneſſeth that the ſame doth iſſue from the meere and alone loue of God, there is nothing remaineth to our owne worthineſſe or the deſert of works. For why are we ſonnes? Verily becauſe God hath begunne to loue vs freely, when we were more worthie of hatred then of loue. And ſeeing that the ſpirit is the pledge of our adoptiõ: hence it followeth, that if there be anie good thing in vs, it muſt not be ſo ſet againſt the grace of God, that rather it muſt be aſcribed vnto it, as receiued from it. The Name whereof he ſpeaketh, cannot be a vaine title, For it is God who pronounceth vs with his owne mouth to be his ſonnes: as he gaue a name to Abraham, according to the thing it ſelfe.

Therefore the world. This temptation doth vehemently aſſayle our faith, that wee ſhould not ſo be accounted for the children of God, or haue anie note of ſuch excellencie ſeene in vs, ẏ rather the whole world almoſt doth hold vs for a mocking ſtocke. Therefore by the preſent condition it can hardly be ga-

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thered that God is our Father: for the diuell inuenteth all wayes to darken his blessing. He giueth a remedie to this offence when hee saith, That it is not yet knowen What manner of men we are, because the world knoweth not God: therefore it is no meruaile, if it contempne his children. Of which thing ther was a notable paterne in Isaac & Iacob. For when each of them was elected of God, the one Ismael scoffed and iested at, Gen. 21. 9. & 27. 41. the other Esau persecuted w̄ threatenings & with sword. Therfore howsoeuer we seeme to be oppressed in ỹ world, our saluatiō remaineth neuertheles founde & in good state.

2 We are now the sonnes of God. Now he descendeth to euery ones proper feeling. For albeit the wicked doe not intice vs to cast away our hope, yet our present estate is far frō ỹ glory of ỹ childrē of God. For in respect of ỹ body we are dust, & a thing of nothing: death is euer before our eies, & we are in danger of many miseries, & the soule is subiect to infinit euils: so ỹ we alwaies find hel in our selues. How much more need is ther ỹ al our senses be drawen frō ỹ beholding of things present, least the miseries wherwith we are compassed, doeth driue vs out of the hope of ỹ happinesse that yet appeareth not. For this is

the Apostles counsell, that wee shall doe foolishlye, if we measure what God hath giuen vnto vs, by our present condition, but that we must holde fast by an assured faith, ý which yet appeareth not.

And we know that when we shall be made manifest. This condition must be chaunged into an Aduerb of time where, or when. Further this worde shall appeare, is taken otherwise then before. The Apostle sayde a lyttle before, ý it appereth not yet what we shal be, since the fruit of our adoption is hid: because our felicitie is in heauen, and we are straungers farre from thence in the earth, & because this fraile life that is subiect to an hundreth deaths, is farre vnlike to that eternall glorye which belongeth to the children of God: because being shut vp after a slauishe manner in the prison of flesh, we are farre distaunt from the frée dominion of heauen and earth. But nowe he referreth this note to Christ, When hee shall appeare. For hée teacheth the same thing that Paule doeth vnto the Collos. chapter. 3. verse. 3. where he sayth, Your life is hidde with Christ: but when Christ which is your lyfe shall appeare, then shall yée also appeare with him in glory. And indéede our fayth can no other waye remaine

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stedie, then while it loketh vnto ỹ comming of Christ. For this is the cause why God doeth deferre the manifestation of our glory: because Christ is not yet made manifest in the power of his kingdome. This I say, is ỹ onely prop of our faith, that we may patiently waite for the life that is promised vs. So soone as any one doth turne aside but a lyttle from Christ, it cannot be chosen but hee shall faint.

By the word Knowe, he noteth out the certaintie of Faith, that he maye discerne it from opinion. Neither is heere noted a simple and vniuersal knowledge, but that which euery one ought to apply to himselfe, that he may know of a truth, that he shall once bee made lyke vnto Christ. Therefore howsoeuer the giuing forth of our glorie is deferred to the cõming of Christ, yet the knowledge of it is most excellently assured.

Like. Ye doth not meane that we shall be equall, but there must néedes be some difference betwéene the head and the members: but we shall be like him, because hee shall make our vile bodie like to his glorious bodie, as Paule teacheth. Phil. 3. 21. For the Apostle goeth about to shew ỹ this is the last end of our adoption, that ỹ which by order went

before in Christ, be at the last fulfilled in vs. Yet the reason that is added, seemeth to be weake. For if the beholding of Christ shall make vs lyke vnto Christ, the wicked shall haue the same glorie with vs, who also shall see him. I aunswere, that this is a familiar kinde of beholding, which the wicked cannot beare, but be sore amazed: yea ouer and besides that they shall horribly feare, and flye from the sight of God: his glorie shal blind their eyes euen so that they shall be amazed with confusion. For we see howe Adam knowing his owne euill, fled from the presence of God Gen. 3.6. And God doth pronounce that generally vpon all men by Moses, No man shall see me and liue, Exod. 33. 20. Because it cannot otherwise be, but that the maiestie of God as a consuming fire, do consume vs as stubble: such is the weakenes of our flesh. And as the Image of God is renewed in vs, we haue eyes prepared to the seeing of God. And now indeede God beginneth to restore his image in vs: but in how small a measure: Therefore except we be disburdened of all the corruption of our flesh, we cannot see God face to face. Which also is expressed in this note, Such as he is.

Neyther doth hee nowe take from vs all

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sight of God in this life: but so as Paul saith, 1. Cor. 13. 12. Now we see as in a glasse by a darke speaking. And this kinde of seeing with an eye beholdinge, hee discerneth else where. In summe, God setteth forth himselfe now to be seene of vs, not such as he is, but such as our small capacitie can comprehende him. So is fulfilled that which is set downe in Moses, that we see him onely as it were on the backpart. Exo. 33. 23. Because in his face there is an ouer-palling brightnesse. It is further to bee noted that this reason which the apostle bringeth, is taken from the effect and not from the cause. For he doeth not teach, that wee shall bee lyke him therefore, because wee shall inioye the sight of him: but he prooueth that we shall therefore bee partakers of the diuine glorie, because except our nature were indued with a spirituall, heauenly and an happie immortalitie, it could neuer come so neere vnto God. And yet there shal not be such a perfection of glory in vs, that our sight shal comprehend God wholy. For there shall be euen then betweene him and vs, a great distance of proportion. But when the Apostle saith, we shall see him as he is, he noteth out a new & vnspeakable kind of seeing, whereof we are now ignorant.

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For so long as we walke by faith, Paule teacheth, that we are straungers from him. 2. Cor. 5. 6. And so often as he yelded himselfe to be seene of the fathers, he was not seene in his being, but vnder certaine markes. There then shall the maiestie of God which now is secret, be seene at the last in it selfe, when the vaile of this mortall and corruptible nature shall be taken away. I passe by other subtill reasonings. For we see how Augustine doth vexe himselfe in them, and yet we see he doth not ridde himselfe thereof, both in his Epistels to Paulina, and Fortunatus, and also in his booke of ỹ Citie of God. 22. & in other places. Yet ỹ which he saith there is worth noting, That in this inquisition the meane of seeing is more excellent then of speaking: and that there must be heede taken, least while by contending we seeke how God can be seene, we leese the peace and holinesse, without which no man shall see him.

3 Euery one which hath this hope. Now he concludeth that therefore the indeauor of holinesse ought not to waxe colde in vs, because our felicitie doth not yet appeare, for that hope sufficeth. Further we knowe that those things are hoped for, which are hid. The meaning therefore is: Howsoeuer we haue

not Christ yet present before our eyes, if yet we trust in him, that it cannot be, but this hope will stir vs vp, and pricke vs forward to follow after holinesse: because being right it guideth vs to Christ, whom we knowe to be the perfect example of holinesse.

4 Whosoeuer doth commit sinne, doth also commit iniquitie, and sinne is iniquitie.

5 Further ye knowe that hee was made manifest, that he might take away our sinnes, and in him there is no sinne.

6 Whosoeuer abideth in him, sinneth not: whosoeuer sinneth, hath not seene him.

4 THe Apostle hath before alreadie shewed how vnkinde we are towardes God if we lightly esteeme the honour of our adoption, whereby he preuenteth vs of his owne good will: & do not at the least render vnto him loue againe. He hath together put in betweene that admonition, that our affection must not be made lesse, because the happie estate promised is deferred. And now because men vse to flatter themselues in euils more then is meete, he correcteth this wicked cockering, pronouncing that they are wicked, and breakers of the lawe, whosoeuer do sin:

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For it is verie credible, that there were then such, as by these flatterings did extenuate their sinnes, and make them seeme lesse then they were: It is no maruell if we sinne, because we are men: but there is great odds betweene sinne and the breaking of the law. The Apostle driueth from them this vayne excuse, when he defineth sinne to be ỳ transgression of the lawe. For his purpose is, to set before their, the hatred and horrour of sinne.

The name it selfe of sin seemeth to some to be but a light thing: but iniquitie or trãsgression of the lawe, cannot so easely be forgiuen. But the Apostle doth not make sins equall, when he condemneth all sinners of iniquitie, but he laboureth simplye to teach, that sinne ariseth of the contempt of God, & that by sinning the righteousnesse of the law is broken. Wherefore this doctrine of Iohn hath none agreement with that doating Paradox of ỳ Stoikes, Furthermore to sinne, in this place doth not signifie to offend in some work, nor is ỳ name of sin taken for euerye offence: but he calleth ỳ sin, when men runne headlong into euil with ỳ whole affection of the hart. And he doth not meane ỳ others sin, except they which are addicted to sin. Neither

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are ẏ faithfull, who are still intangled with the affections of the flesh, taken for wicked, albeit they are not cleane and pure from sin: but because sin doth not raigne in thē, Iohn saith that they sinne not: as I wil anone expresse more at large. The summe of this sentence is, That their wicked life who giue thē selues leaue to sinne, is abhominable to god, and cannot be indured of him, seeing it is contrarie to his law. Hence it doth not folow nor can it be gathered, that the faithfull are wicked: because they desire to be subiect to God, & they mislike with themselues becaus of their sins, & that for euery offence. And againe, as much as in them lieth, they frame their liues to the obedience of the law. But where the desire or vsual course of sinning is wᵗ deliberatiō, there is ẏ trāsgressiō of ẏ law.

5 Furder you know that he hath appeared, He showeth by another argument how much sinne and faith do differ. For it is Christes office to take away sinne, and to this ende he was sent of his father: and by faith we are made partakers of the righteousnesse of Christ. Therefore whosoeuer beleeueth in Christ, it is of necessitie, that he be purged from sinnes. But whereas our Sauiour Christ is sayde in another place to take away

awaye sinnes, because by his death he hath purged them, least they should be laid to our charge before God: Iohn. 1.29. In this place Iohn meaneth that truly and in very deed, as they say, Christ taketh away sinnes, because by him our olde man is crucified. Rom.6.6. And his spirit doth mortifie our flesh, with the corrupt affections thereof, by repentance. Neither doth the course of the text suffer to expound it of remission. For so, as I haue said he reasoneth, that they which cease not to sin, do make frustrate the benefit of Christ: seeing he came that he might destroy the kingdome of sinne. And that is referred to sanctification of the spirit.

There is no sinne in him. He speketh not heere of Christs person, but of his whole bodie. Whether so euer Christ hath shed out his power, he denieth that there is anye more place for sinne. Therefore he straight gathereth that they sin not which abide in Christ. For if by faith he dwell in vs, he performeth that his worke, that he may purge vs from sinne. Whereupon it appeareth what it is to sinne. For Christ doth not renewe vs perfectly in one day or moment with his spirit, but he continueth the renuing that is begun in part all the life long. It cannot therefore

therfore be but the faithfull shuld be subiect to sinne, so long as they liue in the worlde. But forasmuch as Christs kingdome doeth flourish in them, sinne is abolished. In the mean time, they are accompted off, according to the principall parte, that is, that they are called iust, & said to liue iustly, because with a sincere affection of the hart they labour after righteousnesse. They are sayd not to sin: because albeit they fall by the infirmitie of the flesh, yet they do not consent vnto sinne: but rather frine with griefe of heart, that they may truly say with Paule, they do the euill which they would not. Rom. 7. 19 The faithfull he saith do abide in Christ, because by faith wee are grafted into him, and are made one with him.

6 Whosoeuer sinneth hath not seene him. Hee hath according to his wont, answered the contrarie parte, that wee maye knowe that the faith and knowledge of Christ, is falsly pretended, without newnes of lyfe. For Christ is no where idle where he raigneth: but sheweth forth the power of his spirite. And it is said alreadie that it is his office to put sinne to flight, no otherwise then the Sun driueth away ỹ clowdes with his brightnesse.

And we are taught again by this place, how liuelye and effectuall a thing the knowledge of Christ is: which indeede doth transforme vs into his Image. So by Affection and Knowledge, there is no other thing meant then faith.

7 Little children let no man deceiue you: he that doth righteousnesse is righteous, euen as he is righteous.

8 Hee that committeth sinne is of the Diuell, because the Diuell sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose was the sonne of God made manifest, that he might loose the workes of the Diuell.

9 Whosoeuer is borne of God sinneth not, for his seede remaineth in him: neyther canne hee sinne because hee is borne of God.

10 In this are the children of God knowen and the children of the Diuell.

7 HE that dooth righteousnesse. The Apostle teacheth in this place, that the newnesse of lyfe must be made knowen by good workes: and that the lyuelynesse wher

of hée hadde spoken, which is betwixt Christ and his members can not stande, excepte it bring forth the fruite. As if hée hadde sayde, Séeing it doth become vs to bée lyke vnto Christ, let the truth & witnesse of this thing, appeare in our lyfe. This exhortation is all one with that of Paules, in the 5. to the Galathians vearse. 25. If you liue in the Spirite, walke also in the Spirite. For many would gladly perswade themselues that they haue righteousnesse hidde in their hearts, while their féete, their hands, their tongues, & eyes, are let lose to iniquitie.

8 Hee that committeth sinne. Also, this worde to Commit sinne is referred to the outwarde déedes, that the meaning may bée, that there is no lyfe of God and of Christ, where men behaue themselues leawdly and wickedlye, but rather suche are the bonde slaues of the Diuell. By which speach, he more fully expresseth how farre they disagrée from Christ.

For euen as first he hadde sette forthe Christ the Fountaine of all righteousnesse: so nowe also on the contrarye, he assigneth the Diuell, to bée the heade of sinne. Hée denyeth that anye man doth belonge

to Christ, but hée that is righteous, and approueth himselfe to bée such a one by his workes: now he sendeth all other into the diuels fellowship, and casteth them vnder his dominion: that we may know that Sathan doth exercise tyrannie, where the righteousnesse of Christ doth not beare the swaye. And yet there are not to be imagined with the Maniches two beginnings one against another, for we know that the Diuel is euill not by nature & creation, but by the iniquitie of his owne falling away.

We knowe further, that he is not equall with God, that he should contend with him in a like power: but that hée is forced maugher his teeth, that hée cannot do anye thing, except at the will and assignment of his creatour. Finally when Iohn saith, Some are borne of God, and some are of the Diuell, he faineth no propagation as the Maniches did dreame: but he meaneth that the first are gouerned by the Spirite of Christ: and the others are violently carryed of Sathan, as God hath giuen him this power against vnbeleeuers.

Because the Diuell sinneth from the beginning. Euen as before he spake not only of Christes person, when he sayd, hée was righ-

righteous, but dídde assigne him to bée the cause and Fountaine of righteousnesse: so nowe when hée sayth the Diuell sinneth, hée comprehendeth his whole bodie, that is, all reprobates. As if hée had sayde, this is the diuells propertie, that he forces vnto sinne. Wherevpon it followeth, that they are his members and are led of him, whosoeuer delight in sinne.

Further, this Beginning whereof the Apostle maketh mention, is not of eternitie: as when he teacheth that the word was from the beginning. For there is great oddes, betwéene God and creatures. The beginning in God is without time. Wherefore, séeing the word was euer with God, thou shalt not finde any instant of time wherin it began to be: but it is of necessitie that thou come to very eternitie it selfe. And héere Iohn meaneth nothing els, but ý the diuell was an Apostata, immediatelye after the creation of the worlde, and from thence hath neuer ceased to spreade abroade his poyson amongest men.

For this purpose appeared the Sonne of God. Hée repeateth the same thing againe in other wordes, that hée sayde before, That Christ came to take awaye sinne. Hence are

two things to be gathered: That they can not be accompted for the members of Christ, nor anye waye to appertayne to his bodye, in whome sinne doth raigne. For whersoeuer Christ sheweth his power, he putteth the Diuell and sinne to flight. Which also Iohn addeth immediatelye, for the next sentence, where he sayeth, That they sinne not which are borne of God, is the conclusion of those things, that went afore.

The Argument is drawen from repugnaunces, as I layd before: because the kingdome of Christ, which of necessitie bringeth with it righteousnesse, can not stande together with sinne. But I haue alredie touched afore, what Not to sinne doth signifie heere. For hee doth not make the Children of god vtterlye free from all fault, but hee denyeth that they can trulye boaste of this title: except such as from their heart indeauour themselues to frame their life vnto the obedience of God.

Indeede the Pelagians and Puritanes did once abuse this testimonie: when they imagined that ỹ faithfull were indued with an Angelicall puritie in this world. And in this time certaine of the Anabaptistes haue renued that dotage.

But

But whosoeuer dreame of such a perfection, do sufficiently showe what a blockish conscience they haue. And these wordes of the Apostle are so farre off from strengthening their errour, that they suffice to refute them. He sayeth, They sinne not, which are borne of God. Nowe resteth to be seene, whether God do regenerate vs in one moment. But it is manifest that regeneration is so begun in vs, as the remnaunts of the olde man remayne euen vnto death. But if regeneration be not full and perfect, it doth free vs from the bondage of sinne, but according to the measure thereof. Hence appeareth that it cannot be possible, but the Children of GOD are burdened with offences, and do daylye sinne, inasmuch as they haue yet some remaynder of the olde nature.

And yet this remayneth sure that the Apostle sayth, That this is the ende of regeneration, that sinne may be done away: and that they therefore lyue iustlye and godlye, whosoeuer are borne of GOD: because the Spirite of GOD doth correct the desire of sinning.

And that the Apostle meaneth, by the Seede of GOD. For so the Spirite of

God frameth the heartes of the godly vnto right affection, that the flesh with his lustes preuayleth not, but is kept vnder, as being tamed vnder a yoke. In conclusion, the chiefe effects in the elect, the Apostle ascribeth to the spirit of God, who by his power repelleth sinne, and doth not suffer it to flourish.

Neither can he sinne. Here now the Apostle ascendeth higher. For he doth plainly testifie, that the hearts of the godly are so effectually gouerned by the spirite of God, that they followe his direction with an vnchaungeable desire. But this is verie far from Popish doctrine. The Sorbonistes indeede confesse, that the will of man cannot desire that which is right, except it bee holpen by the spirit of God: but they imagine the motion of the spirit to be such, as leaueth vnto vs the free choice of good & euil. Hence they drawe merites, because we willingly obeye vnto the grace of the spirit, which it was in our power to reiect. Finally, they define this to bee the onely grace of the spirite, that wee be able to will well, if we list. Iohn sayth farre otherwise in this place: for he doth not onely teach that we are able not to sinne, but that the motion of the spirit is so effectuall, that of necessitie it holdeth vs in a continuall obedience

of

of righteousnesse. Neither is this the onelye place of Scripture, which teacheth that the will is so framed, that it cannot bee but right. For God testifieth, that he giueth a new hart to his children, and he promiseth that he will cause them to walke in his precepts. Ezech. 36,26. Adde moreouer, that Iohn doth onely teach how effectually God worketh in man, but he plainely affirmeth, that his spirit doth continue his grace in vs to the verie laste breath, that inchaungeable perseuerance may be ioyned with newnesse of lyfe. Wherefore let vs not with the Schole men imagine some middle motiõ, which is in a mans choice to followe, or to refuse: but let vs know that our hearts are gouerned of the spirit of God, that they may constantlye cleaue to the waie of righteousnesse. Further, the absurditie which the Schole men obiect, is easily reselled. They saie, but falsly, that by this meanes Will is taken from man. For will is of nature: but because the corruption of nature bringeth forth onely euill affections, therfore it is of necessitie, that the spirit of God doe reforme it, whereby it maye incline to goodnesse. And againe, because men would easily fall from that which is good, it is of necessitie, that ỹ same spirit continue vnto the end, that

which he hath begun. The answere concerning desert is easie: for it is not to be held for an absurd thing, if men deserue nothing: and yet workes cease not to bee accounted good, which proceed from the grace of the spirit, because they are voluntarie. They haue also reward, because they are freely accounted vnto men, as if they were their owne. But here ariseth a question, whether so soone as anye man is regenerate by the spirit of God, godlynesse & the feare of God can neuer be extinguished in him. For ỳ Apostles words seeme to giue this. They that thinke (the wise) alleadge the example of Dauid, who for a time was so ouerwhelmed with a brutish senselesnesse, that there appeared no sparke to remain in him. And moreouer in the 51. Psalm. 12. he desireth that it may be restored to him again. Wherupon it followeth, ỳ he was depriued of it. Yet I doubt not, but that seede wherewith God doth regenerate his elect, as it is incorruptible, so it keepeth the continuall force. I graunt it may be, that sometimes it bee (as it were) strangled, as it was in Dauid. But yet at what time al godlines seemed to be vtterly put out in him, ỳ quicke cole lay hid vnder the ashes. Satan indeed gooth about to pluck vp whatsoeuer is of God in ỳ elect: but when

he

is most of all let lose: ẏ secret rote remai-
eth, which afterward springeth forth at the
ast. But Iohn speaketh heere, not of one actiõ
s they call it: but of the continual course of ẏ
fe. Certaine frantike fellowes dreame of I
now not what eternall seed in ẏ elect, which
ey alwaies bring frõ their mothers wõbe.
But to this purpose they do more then vnfit-
y wrest Iohn his words: For he disputeth not
f eternal election, but beginneth at regenera-
ion. There are also others twice mad, who
nder this pretẽce will haue euery thing lawe-
ul to thẽ ẏ beleeue, because Iohn saith they cã
ot sin. They will therfore ẏ we folow wout
ifference, whatsoeuer our affectiõ shal craue:
s: so they giue licence to cõmit whoredome,
o steale, & to kill, because there can be no sin
pher ẏ spirit of God raigneth. But ẏ Apostle
meaneth far another thing. For the Apostle
enieth that the faithful can sin, because God
ath written his lawe in their heartes, as it
s in the Prophet Iere. 31. 31.

o By this are knowne. In few words he con-
ludeth, ẏ they do in vaine challenge to them-
elues a name amõgst ẏ childrẽ of God, which
o not approue thẽselues to be such by a godly
holy life: forasmuch as by this marke they
iffer from the children of the Diuell.

Fur-

Further, he doth not so meane, that they are made manifest, that they may be openly known to all the world: but this onely he meaneth, that the fruit and effect of the diuine adoption doth alwaies shew forth in the lyfe.

10 Hee that doeth not righteousnesse is not of God, nor he that loueth not his brother.

11 Because this is the preaching which ye haue heard from the beginning, that we loue one another.

12 Not of Caine which was of that wicked one, and slew his brother, and wherefore slewe he him? Because his owne workes were euill, and his brothers good.

13 Meruaile not my brethren, if the world hate you.

HE that doth not righteousnes. To do righteousnesse, and to commit sinne, are heere set one against another. Therfore to do righteousnesse, is nothing else then from the heart to feare God, and to walke in his precepts, as farre as mans frailtie will beare. For albeit ỹ righteousnes if it be take precisely, is no other thing then the full obseruing of the lawe, from which the faithfull are alwayes farre of: yet because God doth not lay their offen-

fences & faultes to their charge, this percel
of obedience which they perfoꝛme vnto God,
is called righteoulnelle. And Iohn sheweth
plainly that they are not of God, whosoeuer
line not righteoully: because whosoeuer God
calleth, he doth renue thē by his spirit. There-
foꝛe the newnelle of life is a perpetuall wit-
nelle of Gods free election.

And which loueth not his brother. He ap-
plyeth a generall doctrine to his purpose. Foꝛ
hetherto he hath exhoꝛted the faithfull to bro-
therly loue: Now by the same he sheweth the
summe of true righteoulnelle, wherefoꝛe this
part is added in steed of an exposition. But I
haue sayd before after what soꝛt whole righ-
teoulnelle is compꝛehended vnder brotherlye
loue. The loue of God indede hath the first
place, but because of that dependeth brotherly
loue amongst men, oftētimes by a Synadoch
that is contained vnder this: & this again vn-
der that. Therefoꝛe as euerie one is giuen to
humanitie and well doing, so he saith that he
is iust, and so accounted, because loue is the
fulfilling of ỳ law. He cōfirmeth this sentence
when hee sayeth, that the faithfull haue ben
so taught frō ỳ beginning: foꝛ by these woꝛds
he sheweth, that this definition which he gi-
ueth, ought not to seeme straunge vnto them.

12 Not as Caine: Another confirmatio
is taken of ỹ contrarie: because hatred rai
neth in the repꝛobate and childꝛen of the d
uell, and holdeth as it were the chiefetie
their life: of which thing he setteth dow
Caine as an example. In the meane time th
maketh to their comfoꝛt, as he concludeth at
last: Meruaile not if the world hate you. Thi
exposition is to be diligently noted: foꝛ in the
manner of life men are alwaies deceiued: be
cause they place holinesse in figured woꝛkes,
& while they toꝛmẽt themselues with trifles,
they thinke they are twice acceptable to God:
Euen as Monkes doe pꝛoudly tearme theyꝛ
kinde of life, the state of perfection. And in
Poperie there is not thought anie other woꝛ
ship of God, then ỹ filth of superstitions. But
the Apostle doth especially shew that we are
appꝛoued of God, if we loue one another. A
gaine, that the diuell raigneth, where hatred,
grudge, enuie, and displeasures doeth
raign. Yet it is together to be kept in memo
rie that I touched of late, that bꝛotherly loue,
because it ariseth of the loue of GOD as the
effect of the cause, is not separated from it,
but rather is commended of Iohn foꝛ this
cause, foꝛ that it is an appꝛouing of our ho
lynesse befoꝛe GOD. When he sayeth that

Caine was by this cause enforced to the slaying of his Brother, because his owne workes were euill. Hee meaneth that which I haue noted alreadie, that where wickednesse beareth the swaie, hatred possesseth all the partes of life. Hee maketh mention of the iust workes of Abel, that we may learne to beare it patiently, if the world prouoked with no iniury, doe hate vs without cause.

14 Wee knowe, that wee are translated from death to life, because we loue the brethren. He that loueth not his brother abideth in death.

15 Euerie one that hateth his brother, is a manslayer: & you know that no manslayer hath eternall life abiding in him.

16 By this haue wee knowen loue, because hee layde downe his lyfe for vs: and we ought to lay downe our liues for the bretheren.

17 If anie man haue this worldes good, and seeth his brother haue neede, and shutteth vp his compassion frō him, how dwelleth the loue of God in him.

18 My little children, let vs not loue in word and tongue, but in deede and truth.

14 He commendeth loue vnto vs by an excellent speach: because it is a testimonie of our being deliuered from death to lyfe. Wherevpon it followeth, that if we loue our brethren, we are happie, and if we hate them, we are miserable. Ther is no man that doth not desire to escape and to be delyuered from death, therefore they must needs be more then blinde, who by fostering of hatred do willingly pamper their own death. Further, when the apostle saith, that by loue it is knowen that we haue passed into life, he meaneth not that man is his own deliuerer, as if by louing the brethren hee deliuered himselfe from death, & obtained life for himselfe. For he doth not dispute heere of ỹ cause of saluation: but seeing loue is the principall fruite of the spirite, it is also a certaine note of regeneration.

Therfore the Apostle reasoneth from ỹ signe and not from the cause. For because no man doth truely loue the brethren, except he which is regenerate by the spirit. Hence it is rightly gathered, that the spirite of God which is lyfe, doth dwell in them that loue the brethren. But one should therevpon preposterously inferre that lyfe is attained vnto by loue, see-

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ing loue by order is ỳ later. This Argument should haue more coulour, if loue make vs more assured of our life: that then the assurance of saluation doth consist in act. But the answere therof is also easie. For albeit that faith is confirmed by al ỳ graces of god, as by helps, yet it ceaseth not to haue his foundation in the onely frée mercie of God. For example, when we inioy the light, we are sure that the Sunne shineth: if the Sunne giue his beams into the place wherin we are, we haue a certaine more cléere sight: but yet albeit ỳ visible beames doe not pearce through vnto vs, in this same we are satisfied that the Sun yéeldeth out the vse of his shining vnto vs. So after that our fayth is established in Christ, certayne thinges maye come to passe, which maye helpe it: yet in the meane time it resteth in the alone grace of Iesus Christ.

15 Is a manslayer. To the end hée maye stirre vs the more vnto loue, he sheweth how detestable a thing before God, hatred is. Ther is no man but he abhorreth man slaughter: yea, wée al hold the verie name to be execrable. And the apostle sheweth that they are al manslayers which hate theyr brethren. Hée coulde not speake anie thing more bitterlie,

and yet this is not hyperbolical. For who we hate, we could afford that he perished. And it is no matter, if one kæpe his hands from the euill. For the verie desire is condemned before God as much as is the practise. Yea, also when we our selues do not desire to do hurt, if yet we desire that some euil may come vnto our brother from other wher, euen then also we are manslaiers. Therfore ỳ Apostle doeth define the matter, euen as it is, where he giueth the name of manslaughter to hatred. Wherby is conuinced the fœlishnesse of men, because when they doe euen loath the name, they make almost no account of the fault it selfe. And whence is that? Euen because the outward face of things doth occupie all our sences, before God the inwarde affection is regarded. Wherefore least anye doe anye more lessen so exceeding an euill, let vs learne to call backe our iudgements to the iudgement seate of God.

16 By this wee knowe. Now he sheweth what is true loue. For it were not inoughe to praise it excepte the power of it were knowen. And hæ setteth forth a perfect rule of loue, in the example of Christ: because in not sparing his owne lyfe, hæ

made it knowen howe much hée loued vs. Therefore hée biddeth vs labour to this point. The summe is, that therein is our loue commended, if wée transferre the loue of our selues vnto our brethren: So as euerie one after a sorte forgetting himselfe, take care for others. It is indéede most certaine that wée are not farre vnlyke vnto Christ, but the Apostle doeth commend vnto vs imitation, because albeit we attain not vnto him, yet it is good that wée followe his steppes a farre off. Indéede when the Apostle giueth counsaile to hypocrites, that they . . . talk awaye vaine boasting, which bragge that they haue the fayth of Christ, without brotherlye loue, hée doeth shewe, that . . . except this desire doeth preuayle in our hearts, wée haue nothing to doe with Christ. Neyther yet as I sayde doeth hée so set before vs the loue of Christ, that hée requireth an equall loue of vs. For what shoulde that bée else but a driuing of all at once to desperation? But so he will haue our affections framed, that wée maye desire to bestowe both our life and death, first to the glorie of God, and then to the good of our neighbour.

I.ij. Thers

There is another difference betwixt vs and Christ, that there cannot bee the same power of our death For neither is the wrath of God pacified by our bloud, nor life attayned vnto by our death, nor the debt of others is paide. But the Apostle by this comparison, did not respect what was the end or effect of the death of Christ, but he onely woulde that our life should be conformed to his example.

17 If anie haue this worlds good. Nowe he preacheth of the common offices of loue, which proceed from that chiefe fountaine: that is, when we are prepared to reache out our selues euen vnto death for our brethren. Albeit he seemeth to reason from the more to ỹ lesse. For he that refuseth to ease the want of his brother with his good, while his life is not touched, much lesse will he bestowe his life. Therefore hee denyeth that there is loue in vs, if we leaue our brethren destitute of our helpe. But he accompteth so highly of externall liberalitie, that together he sheweth most fitly what is the true way to do well, & what kinde of affectiõ ought to guide the same. Let therfore this be the first proposition: That no man doth truly loue the brethren, but hee will shew forth ỹ same in effect, as oft as occasion doth require. Another, how much riches anie

man

man hath, accordingly he is bound to releeue ỹ brethren, because ỹ Lord by this meanes doth minister vnto vs matter to exercise our loue. The third, ỹ euery ones necessitie is to be cõsidered: because as euerye one needeth meate, drinke, or anye other thing, wherof we haue store, he doeth euen so craue our duetie. The fourth, ỹ ther is no liberality doth please god, except it be ioyned [Tè Sumpatheia] to a cõpassion, many seeme to be liberall, which yet are not anye whit touched with the miseries of their brethren. But the Apostle biddeth vs to open our bowells: which is done when wee put vpon vs almost ỹ same feeling ỹ we may bewaile together ỹ euills of others, no other waies, then as our owne.

The loue of God. Yeare the question is of the loue of brethren. Therfore why doth he name ỹ loue of God? Verily ỹ principle must be kept, that it cannot be but it is the loue of God, shoulde beget in vs the loue of our bretheren. And by this meanes God taketh an experience of our loue towardes him, while he commaundeth vs to loue men for his sake: as it is in the 16. Psalme. My dowing well extendeth not vnto thee: but my will and my desire is vnto the Saints which are in the earth.

18 Let vs not loue in word. Ther is a granting in this first part For we cannot loue onely with the tongue: but because manye doe fally boast of this, the Apostle giueth the name of the thing, to their dissimulation, as vseth often to be done Albeit in the other part he reproueth their vanitie, when he denieth ỹ it is ỹ truth, except it be in dæde. For thus the words are to be resolued: let vs not professe with tongue that we loue, but let vs approue it by dæde: because this is the ryght condition of loue.

19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, & shal perswade our hearts before him.

20 But if our heartes accuse vs, truely God is greater then our hearts, & knoweth all things.

21 Beloued, if our hearts accuse vs not, wee haue trust towards God.

22 And if we aske anie thing, we receiue it of him: because we keepe his commandements, and doe those things that are pleasaunt before him.

19 HE taketh the name of Truth heere in another sence: but it is an excellent gining of a name, that if we loue our brethren truely, we haue hereby a testimonie that we are borne of God, who is the truth, or that the truth of God hath place in vs. But let vs al-

alwayes remember that we haue not that knowledge which the Apostle speaketh of frō loue, as if from thence were to be fetched the assurance of saluation. And indeede from no other where doe we knowe that we are the children of God, but because he sealeth into our hearts his ful adoption by his spirit, and we by faith imbrace the assured pledge thereof offered in Christ. Loue therefore is an increase or inferiour helpe, to the strengthning of faith: and not the foundation whereon it standeth. Why then sayth the Apostle, Wee shall perswade our hearts before God? Verily he sheweth by these words, that faith standeth not without a good conscience. Not that our assurance arise frō thence, or dependeth thereon: but bicause thē we are perswaded truly of our coniunctiō wt̄ god, whē ẏ efficacy of ẏ holy ghost doth shew forth it self in our loue. For it shal alwaies be profitable to weigh what ẏ apostle handleth. For because he cōdemneth in vs a fained professiō of faith, he saith ẏ we cā haue a sound perswasiō before God no other way, then if his spirit do bring forth in vs the fruit of loue. And albeit ẏ a good conscience cā neuer be separate frō faith, yet no man shall thence rightly gather, ẏ we must looke to our workes, that our perswasion may be firme.

20 But if our heart condemne vs. He
proueth by the contrarie, that they haue the
name and shew of Christians in vaine, who
haue not the testimonie of a good conscience.
For if any man be guiltie in his own know-
ledge, and is conuinced in the proper feeling
of his owne soule, much lesse shall hee escape
the iudgement of God. It followeth therfore
that faith is subuerted with the disquiet of
an euill conscience. He calleth, God greater
then our heart, in respect of iudgement, that
is, because he seeth much more clearely then
we, and searcheth more sharpe, and indgeth
more straightly. In which sense Paule saith,
that albeit he knewe nothing by himself, yet
he was not thereby iustified. 1. Cor. 4. 4. For
he acknowledgeth, that albeit he be carefully
giuen vnto his dutie, yet that he offendeth in
many things, and that he doth forgiue him-
selfe by vnaduisednesse, those sinnes which
God doth see. This therefore is the minde of
the Apostle, that it cannot be that he shoulde
escape the iudgement of God, whom his own
conscience doth accuse and conuince. To the
same ende belongeth that he by and by ad-
ioyneth, that God seeth all things. For howe
should those things be secret, which wee are
driuen to see, who in respect of him are block-
ish

ish and blinde? So therefore expound it, God in that he séeth all things, is much greater then our heart. For to take the word ý coupleth together in stéed of a particular causall is not straunge. Now the sense is plain, that is, that séeing the knowledge of God pearceth further then ý sense of our owne conscience, that no man can stand before him, excepte hée whom vprightnesse of conscience sustaineth. But héere is obiected a question: It is certaine that the reprobate are sometime drowned of Satan in such a Lake of féeling, that they féele not their euills at all, and without all griefe or feare, as Paule saith, they runne securely into their destruction. Eph. 4.19. And it is certaine also that hypocrites are wont to flatter themselues, and proudly to contemne the iudgement of God, because that béeing dronkē with a false opinion of righteousnes, they are not touched with their sinnes. The aunswere is easie, That hypocrites are deceiued because they shun the light: and that the reprobates féele nothing, because they goe away from God. Yea, there is no securitie to an euill conscience, but in lurking corners. But héere the Apostle speketh of consciences, which being brought out into light, GOD bringeth to his tribunall seate, and exerciseth

with the feeling of his iudgement. Albeit yet this is also generally true: that we neuer haue any sound peace, except that which the spirite of God doth giue vnto pure heartes. those whome we haue sayd to be astonished, feele yet oftetimes blind prickings, and are tormented in their drousinesse.

21 If our heart accuse vs not. I haue expounded alreadie, that this doth neither belong to hypocrisie, nor to ỹ grose contempt of God. For howsoeuer the wayes of reprobates doe please themselues, yet the Lord trieth the heart sayth Salomon, Pro. 21. 2. This exquesite ballaunce of GOD causeth by his triall, that none canne boast himselfe that hee hath a cleane heart. Therefore the Apostles words hath this meaning, that then we come onely with a quiet conscience into the sight of God, when beeing of a sound purpose in our selues, wee bring with vs the witnesse of a ryght and good heart. That saying of Paule is indeede true: That we haue entraunce to GOD with boldnesse by faith, which resteth vppon the grace of GOD: Ephes. 3. 12. Agayne, that by fayth we haue peace, that our consciences maye bee quyet before God. Rom. 5. 1. But betwixte these sen-

sentences there is no odds. For Paule sheweth the cause of boldnesse: but Iohn onelye maketh mention of an inseparable accident, which is necessarily annexed, though it bee not the cause. Yet heere ariseth a greater hardnesse, because there seemeth no assurance to be left in the whole worlde. For who is there to bee founde whome his heart cannot accuse in anie thing? I answere, that the godlye are so reproued, as they together doe ease themselues: for it is indeede necessarye, that they shoulde inwardly be touched effectually with their sinnes, that feare maye instruct them to humilitie: but by and by they flye to the sacrifice of Christ, where they haue assured peace. Albeit the Apostle doeth saye that they are not accused in anie other sence, because howsoeuer they acknowledge themselues to fayle in many things, yet they are releeued with this testimonie of conscience, because they doe truelye and from the heart feare God, and desire to submit themselues to his righteousnesse. Whosoeuer are indued with this godly desire, & in the meane time knowe that their indeauours, howe much so euer they want of perfection, doe yet please GOD: are worthely sayde to haue a

quiet

quiet and peaceable heart: because there is no inward pricking, which should disturbe their quiet chéerefulnesse.

22 And if we shall aske any thing. Because assured trust and calling vpon God are things ioyned together: euen as before he had taught that an euill conscience was contrarie to assurance: so now he sheweth, that god cannot be called vppon, but of them which feare him and worship him a right in a pure heart. This latter foloweth of the first. There is another generall principle of Scripture, That the wicked are not heard of God, but rather that there sacrifices and prayers are abhominable. Therfore the way is héere shut vp against hipocrites, least they should rush into the presence of God with his contempt.

In the meane time he doth not intende that a good conscience must be brought, as if it did great acceptation to our praiers. Woe be vnto vs if we leane vnto workes, which haue nothing in themselues but matter of trembling. Therefore the faithfull come to the throne of God, no other waies then trusting in the mediation of Christ.

But because the loue of God is euer ioyned with faith, to the end that ỳ Apostle may the more dazle the hypocrites, he depriueth them

them of this singuler priueledge, which God vouchsafeth his children: that is least they should thinke to haue entrance to God with their praiers. When he saith, Because wee keepe his commandements, he doth not mean that our confidence in praying is grounded vpon our workes: but this onely he vrgeth, that godlinesse and the sincere worshippe of God cannot be seperate from faith. And it ought not to seem absurd that he vseth a causall note, albeit he doth not reason of ỹ cause: for an inseperable accident vseth sometimes to be put for the cause. As if one should saye, because the Sun at nonetide doth shine aboue vs, that there is then more heat, yet it doeth not followe, that heate ariseth of the light.

23 And this is his commaundement, that wee beleeue in the name of his sonne Iesus Christ: & loue one an other as he gaue vs commaundement.

24 Hee that keepeth his commaundements abideth in him, and hee in him. And by this we knowe that hee abideth in vs, by the spirite which he hath giuen vs.

23 And

23 AND this is his commandement. Again he applieth a generall sentence to his purpose. The effect is, that we are at such disagreement with God, that we are driuen from his presence, excepte we are knit together by brotherly loue among our selues. Albeit he doth not heere commende loue alone, as before: but he ioyneth it as a companion and handmaide of Faith. The schoolemen depraue these wordes with their owne deuices: as if we obtained freedome to pray, partly by faith, and partly by workes. Wher Iohn requireth this to the right maner of praying, that we keepe the commaundements of God: and after teacheth, that this perfourmaunce standeth in faith and Loue, they gather that the assurance of praying, must be gathered of these two. But I haue sundry times already shewed, that heere is not handled from whence or by what means men get this vnto themselues, that they dare call vpon God. For heere the question is not of the cause or dignitie, Iohn onely sheweth, that God vouchsafeth the honour and priuiledge of his conference to none but to his children, and those that indeede are regenerate by his spirite. Therfore this is the course

of

of speech, where the reuerence and feare of God doth not beare the swaie, it cannot be ỹ God should heare vs. But if our purpose be to obey his precepts, we must consider what hee commandeth. But he doth not separate fayth from loue: but he requireth each of vs as if it were in one fellowship. And this is the reason why he hath put Commandement in the singular number. But this place is verie excellent: because he sheweth as plainely as briefly, wherein consisteth the whole perfection of an holy lyfe. There is no cause why we should alleadge hardnesse, when God doth not tarie vs about by long by walks: but setteth down vnto vs simple and in one word, what pleaseth him. Adde moreouer, ỹ in this shortnesse there is no darknesse, bicause he sheweth vs plainly ỹ beginning & end to liue wel: and because heere is onely mention of brotherly loue, passing by ỹ loue of God: the reson is (as we haue sayd els where) ỹ brotherly loue, as it issueth from the alone loue of God, so is it a certaine and true proofe thereof.

In the name of his son. The name hath respect to ỹ preaching: & this relation is to be noted, because few vndersād what it is to beleeue in Christ. By this speech is easie to gather, ỹ this onely is a true faith which imbraceth Christ

for

for such a one as he is preached in the Gospel. Whereon also it commeth to passe, that there is no fayth without Doctrine: as Paule also teacheth, Rom. 10. 14. And this also together is to be noted, that ỳ Apostle includeth faith in the knowledge of Christ. For he is ỳ liuely image of the father, and in him are hid all the treasures of wisedome and knowledge. Wherefore so soone as euer we decline from him, wee canne doe nothing but wander in errour.

23 He that keepeth his commaundements. He confirmeth that which he had sayd before. That the fellowshippe which we haue with God is manifest by that meanes, if we loue one another. Not that the fellowshippe beginneth there, but because it cannot be idle, and without his effect, wheresoeuer it doth begin to haue a being. And he proueth that by a reson annexed: because God doth not abide in vs, except his spirit doe dwell in vs. But his spirit wheresoeuer he is, it is of necessitie that he shew forth his force & power in working. Whence it is easie to gather, that no other remaine in God and are united vnto him, except such as keep his commandements. When therfore he saith: And in this we know. And, the note of coupling together, for that it

is

is put for the rendering of a cause, is as much as, for, or because. But ỹ circumstaunce of the present cause must be weighed. For albeit this sentence agrée in words with that of Paule Rom. 8. 15. where he saith, that the spirite beareth witnesse in our hearts, that wée are the Children of God, and that by him we crye Abba Father: yet in the sense there is some difference. For Paul speaketh of the assuraunce of free adoption, which the Spirite of God sealeth vp in our heartes: and Iohn heere hath respect to the effects, which the spirite dwelling in vs, doth bring forth. As Paule also himselfe, when he saith, that they are the Children of God, which are ledde by the Spirite of God. For there also he disputeth of the mortifieng of the flesh and newnesse of life.

This is the effect, that thereby it is manifest whether we are the Children of God, if his Spirite do rule and gouerne our life. In the meane time Iohn teacheth, whatsoeuer good workes is in vs, that it commeth from the grace of the Spirite: and that this Spirite is not gotten by our own righteousnesse, but is freely giuen vnto vs.

Chap. 4.

1 BEloued, beleeue not euery ſpirite: but trie the ſpirits whether they be of God or no: becauſe many falſe Prophets are gone out into the world.

2 In this knowe ye the ſpirit of God, euerie ſpirite which confeſſeth that Ieſus Chriſt, is come in the fleſh, is of God.

3 And euerie ſpirite which confeſſeth not that Ieſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is not of God: and this is of that Antichriſt, of whom ye haue heard that he ſhould come, and euen now he is in the world.

HE commeth againe to the former doctrine which he had handeled in the ſeconde Chapter. For manye, as vſeth to be done in newe matters, did abuſe the name of Chriſt to ſpredde their erroꝛs. Others profeſſed Chriſt but in halfe parte. In the meane time, while they had place amongeſt thoſe of the houſeholde, they had ẏ moꝛe abilitie to do harme: Eſpecially Sathan himſelfe, toke occaſion to diſquyet the Church in Chriſt himſelfe. For

hæ is the stone of offence, whereat all must nédes stumble, which holde not the playne waye, as God hath set forth the same vnto vs.

Further, this whole reason of the Apostle standeth on three members. For first he sheweth the euill, whence daunger came to the faithfull, and by this meanes he exhorteth them to take hæde. Hæ setteth downe the manner of héede taking, that they iudge betweene spirites. And this is the second member. At the last he sheweth one speciall from whence was their greatest perill. Hée forbiddeth therefore to heare them, which deny that the sonne of God is manifested in the flesh. Now let vs handle euery one in order. And albeit this reason followeth in the text, That many false Prophets haue gone out into the world, yet it shall be good to begin there. For this sentence containeth a profitable admonition: because, if euen at this time Sathan had filled many, which shoulde spread their falsehoods vnder the name of Christ: the like example ought not to discourage vs at this daye. For this is the perpetuall state of the Gospell, that Sathan busily goe about to infect and to corrupt the puritie thereof by diuers errours.

This our age hath brought forth certain horrible monsters of sectes. By occasion whereof many stand amazed, & not knowing whether to tourne them, do cast away all care of godlinesse. For they finde not any more speedie way to ridde themselues from the daunger of errour. That is altogether foolish: for in flying from the lyght of the truth, they cast themselues willyngly into the dungeon of errours. Wherefore let this cleaue fast in our mindes, that there haue bene false Prophets immediately since the Gospell hath begun to bee published. And let this doctrine also arme vs against that offence. The auncientnesse of errours holdeth the most as if it were so bounde, that they dare not goe out thence. But Iohn sheweth heere, the deadlye daunger of ỹ Church, That if euen then deceiuers were mixed with the Apostles, and other faythfull Teachers, what mervayle is it, if the doctrine of the Gospell long ago being oppressed, many corruptions be spread abrod in the worlde? There is therefore no cause why antiquitie should hinder vs, that we should the lesse freely discerne the truth from falshood.

1 Beleeue not euery spirite. Many as is sayde when the Church is vexed with dis-

cords

words and contentions, being amazed, departe from the Gospell. But the Spirit prescribeth a farre other remedie: that is, that the faithfull receiue not any doctrine without choyce. We must therefore take heede, least being offended with varietie of opinions, we renounce the teachers together with the worde of God. But let this moderation suffice, that all are not to be heard alyke.

The name of ỹ Spirite, I take to be by a Metonimia for him that boasteth, that he is indued with the gifte of the Spirite, to vndertake the office of a Prophet. For when it is graunted to no priuate man that he speak in his name, nor is there credite to be giuen to them that speake, but so farre as they are the instruments of the holy Ghost: the more authoritie the Prophets should haue, God adorneth them with this title, as if hee shoulde take them out of the common sort of men. They therefore were called Spirites, which onely giuing their tongues to the Oracles of the holy Ghost, did after a sort beare the person of his ministerie: they set forth nothing of their owne deuising, nor came they forth in their owne name.

And hereto belongeth so honourable a title, least any thing might faile of the reue-

rence of the worde of God, for the contempt of the minister. For God alwaies wold haue his word receiued from the mouth of men, no other waies, then if he himselfe had plainly appeared from heauen.

Here Sathan hath crept in as a meane: and when he fained in false teachers to adulterate ỹ word of God also gaue them a name vnder which, they might the better deceiue. So the false Prophets vsed alwayes proudly and with ful mouth to arrogate to thẽselues, whatsoeuer honour God had bestowed vpon his seruants. And the apostle seemeth to haue vsed this name, least they might deceiue vs with their false pretences, which falsly pretende the name of God: euen as we see at this daye very many to be amazed with the bare name of the church, that they had rather auolue themselues into the eternall destruction of the Pope, then to take from him any or the least part of authoritie.

Therefore this graunting is to be noted. For the Apostle coulde haue sayde, that euerie one is not to bee beleeued: but because false teachers did so belye the title of the spirite, he so leaueth the same vnto them, that together hee sheweth that it is friuolous and trifling, excepte they do indeede persourme

what

what they pretende, and that they are to be accounted as fooles, who being amazed at the very noyse of an honourable title, dare not inquire of the matter.

Proue the Spirites. Because all Prophecies be not true, the Apostle sayth here that they must be brought to the trial. And he speketh not only to the whole body of ỹ church: but also to euery faythfull man. But it is asked whence we haue such a discretion? They which answere, that the worde of God is a rule whereby euerye thing must bee tryed, which men do publikely set forth, they neither saye nothing nor the whole. I graunt that doctrines are to be proued by the worde of God: but except the spirit of wisedome be present, it will lyttle or nothing profitte to haue the worde of God at hande, whose interpretation we shall not knowe. Euen as, for example, golde is tryed in the fire, and with the touch stone: but of them that haue skill. For vnto the vnskilfull, neyther the touchstone nor ỹ fire can be profitable. Therfore that we may be fit iudges, it is needfull that we be indued with the spirite of discretion. And because the Apostle shoulde commaund vs this in vayne, except we had power to discern, it is for a certaintie to be held

that the godly shall neuer be destitute of the spirite of wisedome, so farre as shall be expedient, so that they aske it of the Lord. But so then ỳ spirite shal lead vs to a true discerning, if we submit all our senses to ỳ word. For it is (as is sayd) like vnto a touchstone: yea, it ought to be of much more price vnto vs: because that onely is true doctrine which is taken from thence. But heere ariseth a hard question: because if euery one haue right and ability to discerne, there can neuer any certaintie be determined: but rather ỳ whole state of Religion shall be vncertaine. I answere, that there is a double triall of Doctrine, priuate and publyke. Priuate, wherby euery one doth establish his owne faith, that he may rest safely in that doctrine, which he knoweth to haue come from God. Neither shall consciences finde other where safe and quiet resting place then in God.

The publyke tryall belongeth to the common consent and good of the Church. For because there is perill least phantasticall men should rise vp, which might rashly boast themselues, that they wer induced with ỳ spirit of God: this remedie is of necessitie, that the faithfull come together, and seeke the meane of an holy and pure consent.

But

But seeing that that olde Prouerbe is too true, How many heads, so many wits: it is certaine that this is the singular worke of God, that al ouerthwarting being mastred, he maketh vs to thinke all one thing, and to grow into an holy vnitie of faith. And howeas vnder this pretence whatsoeuer thinges are at anie time decreed in counsailes, ỹ Papistes will haue to be taken for true Oracles, because the Church did once proue them to be of God: that is too childish. For howeuer that be an ordinarie waie to seeke a consent, to gather a godly and an holy counsell, where the controuersies out of the worde of God may be determined: yet God hath neuer bound vs to the decrees of euerie counsel. Nor yet so sone as an hundred or moe Bishops are come together into one certayne place, it by and by followeth that they haue rightly called vpon God, and asked at his mouth what was ỹ truth: yea, ther is nothing more apparaunt, then that they haue often gone a side from the sincere worde of God. Therefore heere also ought the triall which the Apostle prescribeth to be of force, that the spirits might be tried.

2 In this knowe ye. He annexeth a special marke, whereby one may better discerne

true Prophets from false. Albeit he heere onely repeateth that we had before, that is, that Christ as he is the marke whereto true faith aimeth, so he is the rocke at whom all Heretikes doe stumble. Therefore so long as wee remaine in Christ, the matter is safe: but when we goe aside from him, faith is perished, and all truth is made voyde. But, wee may remember what this confession contayneth. For when the Apostle saith, that Christ is come: hence wee gather that hee was with the Father before: whereby is shewed his eternall Deitie. When hee sayth, That hee is come in the flesh: hee signifieth that in putting on the flesh, hee is made a very man, of the same nature with vs, that hee might bee our brother, saue that hee was free from all sinne and corruption.

Finally, when hee sayth hee is come, wee must consider the cause of his comming: for hee is not sent of his Father in vaine. Heereupon dependeth the office and power of Christ. Therefore euen as the olde Heretikes haue erred from this faith, partlye denying the diuine nature, and partlye the humane nature of Christ: euen so doe the Papistes at this daye, albeit they doe confesse

Christ

hrist to bée GOD and man, yet they hold
ot this confession which the Apostle requy-
eth, because they spoyle Christ of his pow-
r and authoritie: for when they haue estа-
lished theyr frée will, theyr merites of
workes, theyr fained worshippes, satisfac-
tions, and the supportations of Saintes,
howe small a remainder is lefte to Christ:
This therefore meaneth the Apostle, see-
ing that the knowledge of Christ compre-
hendeth in it selfe all the Doctrine of god-
lynesse, therefore we must fixe and cast our
eyes thether, least wée bée deceiued. And in
truth Christ is the ende of the lawe, and
the Prophettes. Neither learne wée anye
other thing by the Gospell, then his power
and grace.

2 And this is the Spirite of Antichrist.
This the Apostle addeth, to the ende that
hée maye make the sleyghtes which seduce
vs from Christ, to be the more detestable:
For wée haue sayde that the Doctrine of the
kingdome of Antichrist, is vsuall and well
knowen: that the faythfull béeing admony-
shed of the dispearsion of the Church which
was to come, might carefully take héede to
themselues.

They

They did therefore worthelye abhorre the name as infamous and vnluckie. Now the Apostle saith, they are members of the kingdome, whosoeuer withdraw frō Christ. But he sayeth that the spirite of Antichrist should come and was now in the worlde, in a diuerse meaning. For he meant that he was then in the worlde alreadie: because the mysterie of his wickednesse beganne to worke. 2. Thes. 2 7. And yet because that the truth of God was not as yet ouerwhelmed with false and vntrue assertions, superstition had not yet preuailed to ỹ corruption of the worship of God, the worlde had not yet falne from Christ by a wicked distrust, the tyrannie set against the kingdome of Christ, did not yet manifestly shew it selfe: therefore he saith ỹ he was to come.

4 Little children ye are of God & haue ouercome them, because hee is greater that is in you, then he that is in the worlde.

5 They are of the world: therefore they speake of the worlde, and the worlde heareth them.

6 We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth vs. He that is not of God heareth vs not. In this we knowe the spirite of truth and

the

the spirite of errour.

4 You are of God. He had spoken of one Antichrist: now he maketh mention of moe. But the plurall number is referred to the false Prophets, which euen then had come abroad, before the head was extant. Further, the purpose of the Apostle is, to giue courage to the faythfull, that they might resist the deceiuers strongly & without feare. For much chéerefulnesse faileth, when there is striuing with a doubtfull successe. Further, it might cause the godly to feare, because that when ỳ kingdome of Christ was scarce sprong vp, they saw the enimyes euen then readie prepared to ouerwhelme it. Therefore howsoeuer they must striue, he yet sayth, that they haue ouercommed: because they shall haue an happie issue. As if he should haue sayde, ỳ in the middest of the conflict they are without daunger, because they shall preuaile. And this doctrine ought to bée caryed further. For whatsoeuer striuings we indure against the world and the flesh, yet it is ioyned with a sure victorie. Indéede sharpe and harde conflicts remaine for vs, and one followeth after another; but because we fight in the power of Christ, and are prepared with the armour of

God,

God, in striuing and labouring wee get the victorie. As much as belongeth to the circumstaunce of this place, it is an excellent consolation, that with whatsoeuer sleyghtes Sathan set vppon vs, yet wee shall stand in the truth of GOD. But the reason that he addeth straight way, is to bee noted: because he is greater, ỹ is strõger which is in vs, then he that is in the world. For that is our infirmitie, that before wee ioyne battayle with the enimie, we are readie to faint. For wee are euen wrapped in ignorannce, and therefore set forth to all sleyghtes: and Sathan is exceeding cunning to deceiue. If wee indure for one day, yet a doubtfulnesse creepeth vpon our minds, what shall come to passe to morrowe: and so we are alwaies doubtfull. The Apostle therefore sheweth that wee are strong, not in our owne strength, but in the power of God. Wherupon he gathereth, that we can no more be vanquished, then god himselfe, who hath armed vs to the ende of the world with his owne power. And in our spirituall warrefare this cogitation must bee setled in our hearts, that we should vtterlye be vndone, if we shoulde fight in our owne strength. But because that when we doe nothing god confoundeth the enimies, the victo-

rie

ie is most certaine.

5 They are of the worlde. This is no small comfort, that they which dare incounter with God in vs, are onely strengthened with worldly helpes. Further, the Apostle vnderstandeth the worlde, as Sathan is the Prince of it. Together is added another comfort, when he saith, that ỳ world imbraceth in false Prophets, that which it doth acknowledge for their own. We see how great ỳ readinesse of man is to vanitie. Therefore false doctrines easilye enter by and by, and spread farre and wide. The Apostle denyeth that there is cause why wee shoulde therefore bee troubled: because there is nothing newe or vnwonted, if the world which is whole a lier, doe willingly heare a lie.

6 Wee are of GOD. Albeit this agreeth vnto all the godly: yet properlye it belongeth to the true and faithfull ministers of the Gospell. For the Apostle by the assaurance of the Spirit reioyceth, that hee and his fellowes doe sincerely serue GOD, and that they haue receyued of him whatsoeuer they deliuer. It maye also bee that the false Apostles maye boast themselues of the same, (as it is their manner vnder a mas king visour, as it were of GOD, to deceyue:)

but

but faithfull teachers differ much from them which speake nothing of thēselues in words, that they doe not performe in deede. Yet we must allwayes remēber what cause he handleth heere. There was a small number of the godly: & vnbeleefe almost possessed all things: few did truely cleane to the Gospell: ỳ greater part was prone to errour. Hence came the occasiō of offence: which that Iohn might meete withall, he biddeth vs be contented with the fewnesse of the faithfull: because all the children of God doe giue honour to him, and submit themselues to his doctrine. For the contrarie member he opposeth immediatlye after, that They which are not of God, heare not the pure doctrine of the gospell. By which words he signifieth, that that great multitude, to whome the Gospell talketh not, doe not therefore heare the approued and lawfull seruaunts of God, because it is a stranger to God himselfe: and that therefore nothing is diminished from the authoritie of the Gospel, while it is reiected of many. But to this doctrine is annexed a profitable admonition, that by the obedience of faith we proue our selues to be of God: There is nothing more easie, then to boast that we are of God: and therfore there is nothing amongst men more cōmon.

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As the Papists at this daie do proudly boast that they are the worshippers of God: and in the meane time they doo no lesse proudly cast aside the word of God. For albeit they counterfait that they beléeue the word of God: yet when it comes to the point, they haue theyr eares shut. But this is the onely testimonie of the feare of God, to reuerence his worde. And ý excuse which many vse to pretẽd hath héere no place. That they therefore flye from the doctrine of the gospell, when it is set forth vnto them, because they are not able to iudge. For it cannot be but ý hée know God in his worde, whosoeuer feareth him, and obeyeth him from his heart. If anie obiect, that many of the elect doe not by and by come to the fayth, yea, that they doe verie frowardlye kicke against it at the first. I answere, that at that time they are not in our iudgement, to bée taken for GODS children. But, this is a marke of one that is a reprobate, when hée doeth obstinatly reiect the truth. It is also to bée noted by the waye, that that Hearing, whereof the Apostle maketh mention, is vnderstoode of the inwarde and earnest hearing of the heart, which standeth in faith.

In this wee knowe. The Relatiue In

this, contayneth the two members afore, as if hée should saye, that thereby truth is knowen from falshode, because some speake from God, some of the worlde. And whereas by the Spirit of truth and errour, some thinke that the hearers are noted: as if he shoulde saie, that they which giue themselues to bée seduced of the deceiuers, are borne to errour, and haue in them the séede of lying: and that they which consent vnto the worde of GOD, are shewed by this testimonie to be true: I doe not allowe of it. For when the Apostle héere taketh a Metonimia of the Spirite, for the teachers and Prophettes, I take it that he meaneth nothing else, then that the tryall of the Doctrine is to bée reduced to these two, whether it bée of God, or of the worlde. Yet in so speaking hée seémes to say nothing. For it will bée easie for euerye one to except, that hée speaketh not but from God. So at this daye, the Papistes boast with an emperiall pride, that all their deuyses are the Oracles of the Spirite. Nor so much as Mahomet but hée giueth out that hée receiued his dotages from no other wher, but from Heauen. And also the Aegyptians forged, that those stinking dotages where with they besotted themselues and others,

were

were reuealed vnto them from Heauen. But I ans were, that we haue the worde of God, which before all things we must aske counsel at. Therefore when deceiuable Spirites pretend the name of God, it is good to search by the Scriptures, whether the matter be so or not. So that we adde a godly indeauour with humilitie and modestie: the Spirit of discreation will bee present, which maye expound himselfe speaking in the Scriptures, as a faythfull interpreter.

7 Beloued, let vs loue one another, because loue is of God: and euerie one that loueth is borne of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loueth not knoweth not God, because God is loue.

9 In this appeared the loue of God to vs ward, because he sent his onely begotten sonne into the worlde, that wee might liue by him.

10 In this is loue, not that wee loued God, but that he loued vs, and sent his sonne a redemption for our sinnes.

7 HE cõmeth again to ỹ exhortatiõ, which he handleth almost in all this Epistle. We said it was mixed wỏ the doctrine of faith

and exhortation to loue. Hee so continueth in two heads, that from one he goeth immediatlye to the other. When he commendeth mutuall loue, he doeth not meane that wee haue done al our dutie if we loue our friends againe, because they loue vs. But because he speaketh in common to the faithful, he might not speake other wayes, then that they might loue one another. He confirmeth this sentence by a reason aleadged sometimes alreadie: that is, because no man shall approue himselfe to be the childe of GOD, except hee which loueth his brethren: and because the true knowledge of God worketh in vs of necessitie the loue of God. Hee opposeth also after his manner the contrarie member, That there is no knowledge of God where loue is not in his strength. And hee taketh a generall principle, because God is loue: that is, because his nature is to loue men. I knowe that manye doe subtillye playe the Philosophers: and especially that the olde writers haue abused this place, that they might proue the Godhead of the Spirit. But the simple meaning of the Apostle is: Because God is the fountaine of loue, that this affection floweth and is powred out from him, whereseuer his knowledge commeth.

Lyke

Lyke as before hée called him lyght, because there is nothing darke in him, but rather hée lyghteneth all with his brightnesse. Hée speaketh not therefore heere of the beeing of GOD: but onelye sheweth what a one hée is to bée perceyued of vs. But, there are two thinges to be noted in these wordes of the Apostle, that this is the true knowledge of GOD, which doeth regenerate vs and frame vs a newe, that wée maye become newe creatures: then that it cannot bée, but that it make vs conformable to GOD. Let goe therefore that foolishe inuention of faith vnformed: because if anye man separate faith from loue, he doeth euen as if one should goe about to take heate from the Sunne.

9 In this hath appeared. By manye other witnesses also wée haue the loue of GOD towardes vs approued. For if it shoulde bée asked why the worlde was created, why wée are placed in it to holde the Lordshippe of the Earth, why wée are preserued in this lyfe, that wée maye inioye infinite and innumerable blessinges, why wée are created to the hope of a better lyfe, why wée are indued with light and vnderstanding: there canne bée shewed no other cause

of all these, then the frée loue of GOD towardes vs. But the Apostle choseth the principall witnesse in this place, and that which farre excelleth all others. For this loue of God was not onely infinite, that hée spared not his owne son, that by his death he might restore vs to lyfe: but the goodnesse is more then meruailous, which ought to rauish our mindes with admiration. Christ therefore is such an excellent and singular agrément of the loue of God towards vs, that so oft as we behold him, he doeth plainelye confirme this doctrine vnto vs, that God is loue. That he calleth him Onely begotten, it serueth to amplification. For in that he sheweth more cléerely, howe entirely he loued vs, in that he gaue his onely sonne to death for our sake. In the meane time hée that is one sonne by nature, maketh manye by adoption and grace: Euen whome so euer hée grafteth into his bodye by fayth. Hée sheweth the ende why Christ was sent of his Father, that wée might liue in him. For without him wée are all dead. But at his comming, he brought lyfe vnto vs. And except our own vnbeléefe doe hinder, we féele this effect of his grace in our selues.

10 In this is loue. Hée setteth forth the loue

loue of God more largely by another reason: that is, because hée gaue his sonne for vs, what time wée were enimyes: as Paule also teacheth, Rom. 5. 6. But hée vseth other wordes, that GOD beeing prouoked by no loue of men, hath loued them freelye of his owne accorde. By which wordes hée meant to teach, that the loue of God towardes vs was without deseruing. Albeit the meaning of the Apostle is to set God before vs to follow: yet the doctrine of faith is not to be neglected, which hée ioyneth together. God hath loued vs freely, why? because we wer sinners as euer wée were borne: then because in this corruption of our nature we haue an heart that is tourned from him, and is not inclinable to right and holy affections. If the subtiltie of the Papistes shoulde haue place, that euerye one is elected of GOD so farre as he foreseeth him worthye of loue: this Doctrine shoulde not stande, That hée loued vs first. For then our loue towardes GOD shoulde haue the first place by order, although that it shoulde bée the last in time. But the Apostle doeth take a graunted Rule of the holye Scripture, which these prophane Sophisters doe not knowe, that wée are borne so wicked and corrupted.

that then is as it were bred in vs an hatred of god, that we desire nothing but that which doth displease him, that euery affection of our flesh doth holde continuall warre with his righteousnesse.

And hee sent his sonne. Therefore Christ with all his benefites is procæded vnto vs, from the alone goodnesse of God, as from a fountaine. And as it is needfull for vs to knowe this, that therefore we haue saluation in Christ, because our heauenlye Father hath loued vs of his own accord: so when we are to sæke the sound and full assurance of the loue of God towards vs, it is conuenient that we loke no where but vpon Christ. Wherefore they dote to their owne destruction, whosoeuer passing by Christ, doe sæke what is determined of them in the secrete counsaile of God. Further, he sheweth again the cause of the comming of Christ, and his office, when he sheweth that he was sent therefore, that he might be a propitiation for our sinnes. And indæde we are first taught by these wordes, that we were all straungers from God by sinne, and that this separation remaineth, vntil Christ come in betwirt, who may reconcile vs. Secondly, we are taught, that this is the beginning of our lyfe,

that

that God being pacified by the death of his son, receiueth vs to fauour. For in that that he is called A reconciler, this properly belongeth to the sacrifice of his death. Wherefore then, that this belongeth onely to Christ, that he put away the sinnes of the world, and so take away the hatred that was betwixt vs and God. But heere may arise some shew of contrarietie. For if God did loue vs before that Christ did offer himselfe to death for vs, what nede was there of a newe reconciliation? So the death of Christ might seeme superfluous. I aunswere, when Christ is sayd to reconcile his Father to vs, that this is referred to our capacitie. For as we are guyltie of euill in our selues, we cannot conceiue God but to be angrie and deadlye displeased, vntill Christ abolish sinne by his death, vntil he deliuer vs with the price of his bloud from death. Againe the loue of God requireth righteousnesse. Therefore, that we may be assured that we are beloued, it is of necessitie that we come to Christ, in whom onely we finde righteousnesse. Now we see the varietie of speaking, which is vsual in Scripture, according to diuers respects, that it is apte and most fitly profitable to faith.

God did therefore put his sonne betwixt,

to reconcile himself vnto vs, because he loued vs: but that loue was hidde, because in the meane time we were enimies to God, dayly prouoking his indignation. Then the feare and terrour of an euill conscience, didde take from vs all taste of lyfe. Therefore inasmuch as pertaineth to the feeling of our faith, God beginneth to loue vs in Christ. And albeit the Apostle do heere intreat of the first reconciliation, yet let vs knowe, that this is the perpetuall benefite of Christ, that by putting away our sinnes, he might make God at one with vs. And this the Papists also in some parte do graunt: but afterwards they lessen this grace, and almost bring it to nothing, in bringing in fayned satisfactions. But if men redeeme themselues with the price of workes, then Christ shall not be an onely reconcilement, as he is called heere.

11 Beloued, if God haue so loued vs, we ought also to loue one another.

12 No man hath seene God at any time. If we loue one another, God dwelleth in vs: & his loue is perfect in vs.

13 In this we knowe that we abide in him, and he in vs: because he hath giuen vs of his spirite.

14 And

14 And wee haue seene and doo beare witnesse, that the father hath sent his sonne the sauiour of the world.

15 He that confesseth that Iesus is the sonne of God, in him dwelleth God, and he in God.

16 And we haue knowen and beleeued the loue that God hath in vs.

NOw the Apostle applyeth to his purpose, that which he lately spake of the free loue of God: that is, that by the example of God he might exhorte vs to brotherly loue. As also Paule setteth Christ forth vnto vs, who offered himselfe vnto his father a sacrifice of a sweete smell, that euery one of vs might bestowe our selues to our brethrens good Ephe 5.2. And Iohn doth admonish vs, that our loue must not be for rewarde, when he biddeth vs loue our brethren, as God loued vs. For that must bee repeated, That wee were loued freelye. And in deede when wee respect our owne priuate commodite, or render to our friends & acquaintance lyke for lyke, it is certaynly selfe loue, and cannot bee accounted for true charitie, that of the Apostle is heere required.

12 No man hath seene God. The same words are had in the first chapter of the gospell ver. 18. But Iohn Baptist respecteth not the same ende altogether in that place: for he onely sheweth, that God cannot otherwise bee knowen, then he hath manifested himselfe in Christ. The same doctrine the apostle doth heere extend further, that we comprehend the power of God by faith and loue, that we may know that we are his children and that he dwelleth in vs. Yet he first speaketh of loue, when he sayth, That God dwelleth in vs, if we loue one another: because it is perfect, that is, his loue truly approued in vs: as if he should say, that God doth shewe himselfe to be present, when by his spirite he frameth our hearts to the loue of our brethren. In ỹ same sense he repeateth that, which he had said once alreadie That we know by the spirite which he hath giuen vs, that he dwelleth in vs. For it is a confirmation of the next sentence: because loue is an effect of the spirite. Therefore this is the effect, seeing loue is of the spirite of God, we cannot truly and with a sincere heart loue our Brethren, but the spirite sheweth forth his power. By this meanes he is testified to dwel in vs. Further God dwelleth in vs by his spirite.

There-

Therefore by loue we shall proue that wee haue God dwelling in vs. Againe, whosoeuer boasteth that he hath God and doth not loue the brethren: by this one testimonie his vanitie is confuted; because he pulleth God from himselfe. When he saith, And his loue is perfect, he taketh the note of coupling together in stede of a particular causall. And the loue of God may be taken two wayes: either wherewith we loue him, or which he inspireth into vs. That God hath giuen vs his spirite, and giuen vs of his spirite, is all to one effect, for we knowe that the spirit is giuen to euery one by measure.

14 And we haue seene. Now he expaundeth the other part of the knowledge of God, which we haue touched: that he communicateth himselfe with vs in his Sonne, and offereth to be inioyed. Whereupon it followeth, ỹ he is perceiued of vs by faith. For hereto is the Apostles purpose, that we are so vnited to God by faith & loue, that he dwelleth truly in vs, and by the effect of his power doth after a sort shew himselfe visible, which otherwise cannot be seene. When hee saith, We haue seene, and testifie: he setteth out himselfe and other Apostles: and he meaneth not euerie seeing, but that which is ioyned

ned to faith, whereby they acknowledged in Christ the glorie of God: as also it followeth, That he was sent to be the sauior of the world, which knowledge procéedeth from the inlightening of the spirite.

15 He that shall confesse. Ye that repeateth that generall rule, That we are vnited to God by Christ, and that we cannot bée ioyned to Christ, except God abide in vs. And faith and confession, are put without difference in the same sense. For albeit that hypocrites dw most falsly bragge that they haue faith: yet the apostle dwth héere acknowledge none in the order of such as confesse, except such as dw indéede and from the heart beléeue.

Further when he sayth, That Iesus is the Sonne of God, he comprehendeth the whole summe of faith in these fewe wordes. For there is nothing néedfull to saluation, which faith findeth not in Christ. But after he hath spoken in general, that men are so grafted into Christ, that Christ dwth ioine them to god, he addeth a reason, which they hadde séene themselues: that hée might applye the generall sentence to them, vnto whome hée writeth.

Then followeth an exhortation, that they maye

maye loue others, as they themselues are loued of God. Wherefore this is the order, and this is the continuaunce of his speach, The faith of Christ causeth that God abideth in men. But we are the pertakers of this grace. Further seeing God is loue, no man can abide in him, except he loue his brethren. Therefore it is good that loue do raygne in vs, seeing God hath ioyned himselfe vnto vs.

16 We haue knowen and haue beleeued. It is, as if he shoulde haue sayde, Wee haue knowen by beleeuing. For such a knowledge is not had but by faith. But hence wee gather, how much a wauering and doubtfull opinion differeth from Faith. Further, albeit he goeth about in this place to applye the next sentence to the Readers, as I haue sayd alreadie, yet he defineth the substance of faith diuersly. First hee had sayde, Whosoeuer beleeueth that Iesus is the sonne of God. And now he sayth, By Faith we know the loue of God towardes vs. Whereby it appeareth, that the fatherly loue of God is apprehended in Christ: and that they knowe not any thing at all in Christ for certaine, excepte it bee onelye such, as acknowledge them-

themselues by his grace to be the children of God. For therefore the Father doth set forth his sonne vnto vs, that he might adopt vs in him.

God is loue. It is as it were the lesse proposition in the syllogisme: because he reasoneth from faith to loue, after this manner, God dwelleth in vs by Faith: but God is loue: therfore, whersoeuer God remayneth, there loue must needes flourish. Hereupon it followeth, that loue is necessarily knit vnto faith.

17 In this is loue perfect in vs, that wee might haue boldnesse in the daye of iudgement: that, as he is, we also are in this world.

18 There is no feare in loue, but perfect loue casteth out all feare: because feare hath painfulnesse in it. And he that feareth, is not perfect in loue.

17 THere are two mẽbers of this speach: that then we are made partakers of the diuine adoption, when we so resemble god, as children do their father, and then that this boldnes is an incomperable good, because that without it, we are most miserable. Therefore in the first place he sheweth vpon what

what condition god hath imbraced vs in loue: and how in effect we inioye this grace which he hath giuen vs in Christ. Therefore the loue of god towards vs is here to be vnderstood. He saith it is Perfect, because it is powred out in full measure, and performed so throughlye, as if it were absolute on all partes. But he affirmeth that there are none partakers of this good, except such as being conformable vnto God, do approue themselues to be his Children. The argument therefore is of those things, which be ioyned together.

That we may haue boldnesse. Now he beginneth to shew the fruite of the loue of God towards vs: albeit he will afterwards shewe it more clerely by the contrarie. But yet this is inestimable felicitie, that we dare stande boldly before God. For by nature we fly from the ~~light~~ of God, and worthely. For seeing he is the Iudge of the world, and our sinnes do presse vs with guiltinesse, it is of necessitie, that together with God, death and hell come into our minde. Hence is the feare which I spake off, that men flye from God, as much as lyeth in them.

Iohn denieth that the faithfull are afraid, when there is mention made to them of the

last iudgement: but rather to come bold and cheerefull to the iudgement seate of God: because they are assuredly perswaded of his fatherly loue. Therefore, so much hath euery one profited in the faith, as he is rightlye prepared in minde to waite for the daye of iudgement.

As hee. By these wordes as I said alreadie, he doth meane agayne, that this is requyred of vs, that we resemble the image of God. Such therefore as God is in heuen, such doth he commaunde vs to bee in this worlde, that we may be accompted his children, for the image of God, when it doth appeare in vs, it is as a seale of his adoption. But so hee seemeth to place parte of our trust in workes. Therefore heere the Papists do stroute themselues, as if Iohn denyed that trust, to haue an assured confidence of saluation by the alone grace of God, except workes did helpe together. But they are deceiued in that, that they weigh not that the Apostle doth not heere fetch his Argument from the cause: but the place is of things ioyned together.

And wee willinglys confesse, that no man is reconciled to God by Christ, except we toge-

together hee be reformed and made agreeable to the Image of God: and that they are so conformable, that they cannot bee seperated the one from the other. The Apostle therefore sayth this most fitlye, for he doth driue all them from the assurance of Grace, in whome there is not seene any lykenesse of God. For it is most certayne that such a are vtterly straungers to the Spirite of GOD, and to his sonne Christ.

Neyther also do we denye, that the newnesse of lyfe auayleth to the confirmation of an assurance: but that I may speake so, that it be taken as a seconde helpe. But in the meane time it behoueth vs to bee grounded vpon onely grace. Neyther indeede otherwayes shoulde Iohns doctrine agree with it selfe. For common experience doth shewe, and the Papistes themselues are constrayned to graunt, that there is allwayes a cause of fearfulnesse in the respect of workes.

Wherefore no man shal euer come with a quyet and perswaded minde to the iudgement seate of GOD, except hee determine first with himselfe, and willyngly confesse that hee is of him euen freelye beloued,

Yy. But

But there is no cause that any man shoulde meruaile, that ỳ Papists taste none of these things, seeing the miserable men knowe no faith, but that which is full of doubting. And further, that hypocrisie doth ouer spred them with darknesse, least they should earnestlye bethinke, how fearfull is the Iudgement of God, where Christ is not present a mediatour. Others passe by the resurrection, as if it were a tale: but that we may goe forthe glad and chéereful to méete Christ, it doth behoue vs to haue our faith fixed in his grace alone.

18 There is no feare. Now by contraries he commendeth the excellencie of that good: for he saith, that we are continuallye tormented, vntill God do deliuer vs from that miserable torment, with the remedye of his loue towards vs. The effect is, seeing nothing is more miserable, than to be vexed with continuall disquiet, that we attain vnto this loue of God towardes vs being knowen, that we maye quietlye rest without feare. Whence appeareth, how singular a benefite it is, that God doth vouchsafe vs worthy of his loue.

Further, of this doctrine he will immediately raise an exhortation. But before he exhort

exhort vs to our dutie, he commendeth this guifte of God to vs, which by faith taketh feare from vs. I knowe that all this place is other waies expounded of many: but I respect what the Apostle meaneth, not what others thinke. They saye, That there is no feare in loue: because when of our owne accord we loue God, we are not constrained to his obedience by force and feare. Wherefore, according to them, a seruile feare is heere opposed to a voluntarie reuerence. Whence also is risen the distinction of seruile & childly feare. I grant indeed that that is true, when we willyngly loue God as a Father; that we are no more vrged with the feare of punishment: but that doctrine hath no agreement with this place. For the Apostle doeth onely teach, that when the loue of God is perceiued and knowen vnto vs by Faith, peace is giuen vnto our consciences, leaste they be any more disquieted.

Yet it maye be asked, when perfect Loue casteth out feare: because being indued with some taste onely of the loue of God towards vs, we are neuer altogether delyuered from feare. I aunswere: that albeit that feare is not perfectly done awaye, yet when we flye vnto God, as vnto a quyet hauen, safe and

free from all daunger of shipwracke, feare is truly done awaye, because it giueth place to Faith. Therefore feare is not so cast out, but that it doth moue our myndes: but it is so cast out, that it maye not molest nor hinder our peace, which we perfectly obtaine by Faith.

Feare hath paynfulnesse. Here also the Apostle doth set out the greatnesse of the grace whereof he speaketh. For seeing it is a most miserable condition to suffer continuall torments, there is nothing more acceptable, then with a quiet conscience & peaceable minde, to present himselfe vnto the sight of God. Where others saye, that seruauntes feare, because they set before their eyes, punishment and scourges, and did not theyr dutie but constrained, it is nothing to the Apostles meaning, as is sayde alreadye. So in the nexte parte, when they expounde, that he is not perfect in loue which feareth: because he submitteth not himselfe willingly to God, but would rather ridde himselfe out of bondage.

Which doth not agree with the text. For the Apostle doth rather teach, that this is a mistrust, whereas a man feareth, that is, hath an vnquiet minde: because the loue of God

being

being well knowen, doth quiet the minds.

19 We loue him, because hee loued vs first.

20 If a man saye I loue God, and hate his brother, he is a liar. For he that loueth not his brother whome he hath seene, howe can he loue God, whome he hath not seene?

21 And we haue this commaundement of him, that he which loueth God, do loue his brother also.

19 THis word [Agappoumen] that is, we loue, may be read as wel in the indicatiue mode, as in the imperatiue, yet the former sense doth farre better agree. For the Apostle in my iudgement doeth repeate the former sentence, because GOD doeth preuent vs with free loue, we do yelde vnto him our duetie: that he may straight waye gather that hee is to be beloued in men, or the loue which we ought of duetye to yelde vnto him, is to be testified by vs towardes men.

Yet if any man like the imperatiue mode, the speach shall haue the same sense, Because God hath loued vs freely, let vs nowe loue

him agayne. But that loue cannot be found, except it bring forth a brotherly loue among vs. Therefore he sayth, that they do lye, who bragge that they loue God, when as they hate their brethren. But the reason which he addeth seemeth to be weak, for it is a comparison of the lesse and the greater. If (sayth he) we do not loue our brethren with whom we liue, much lesse can we loue God, who cannot be seene. There is a double exception at hande. For both the loue wherewith wee loue God doth spring of Faith and not from sight, as it is 1. Pet. 1 8. And also there is a farre other respect to be had of God, then of men, because when as God doth draw vs of his great goodnesse to loue him, men are often worthie to be hated. I aunswere, that the Apostle (which no doubt ought to be amongest vs) doth take heere as a thing confessed, that God doth offer himselfe vnto vs in men, which do expressely beare his Image: and that hee doth require of vs that we performe those duties towardes them which he himselfe doeth not stand in need of, as we read in the Psalme. 16. 1. My goodnes hath not reached vnto thee O Lord, my loue is towards the Saintes which are in earth.

And

nd truely the fellowshippe of the same na-
ure, the vse of so many things, the mutuall
ommunication would intice vs vnto loue,
nlesse we were verie hard harted. But Iohn
eant nothing els, but that it is a deceitfull
oasting, if a man saye that he loueth God,
nd neglecteth his image which is before his
yes.

21 And this commaundement. A stron-
er argument from the authoritie and doc-
rine of Christ, for he doeth not teach of the
are loue of God: but commaundeth also to
ue our brethren. Wherefore we must so
egin with God, that together thers may be
proceading vnto men.

Chap. 5.

1 EVerie one that beleeueth that Iesus is
Christ, is borne of God: and euerye
ne that loueth him which begot, loueth him
lso which is begotten of him.

2 In this we know that we loue the chil-
ren of God, if we loue God & kepe his com-
naundements.

3 This is the loue of God that we keepe
is commandements: and his commandements

are not greeuous.

4 Because all that is borne of God, doeth ouercome the worlde: and this is the victorie which ouercommeth the worlde: euen your faith.

5 Who is he that ouercommeth the world, but he which beleeueth that Iesus is the sonne of God?

1

BY another reason he confirmeth, that faith and brotherly loue are things ioyned together. For seeing God doth regenerate vs by fayth, it is of necessitie that wee loue him as a Father. But that loue comprehendeth all his children. Therefore faith cannot bee separated from loue. The first sentence is, That they are borne of God, whosoeuer beleeue that Iesus is Christ. Where thou seest againe, that Iesus alone is sette forth to bee the scope of faith: euen as it findeth in him righteousnesse, and lyfe, and whatsoeuer good thing canne bee wished, and God wholy. Wherefore this is the right waye to beleeue, when wee direct our mindes vnto him. But to beleeue that he is Christ, is to

hope

ope for from him, whatsoeuer thinges are promised of the Messia. For indeede the bare title of Christ is not attributed vnto him in this place: but rather the office which is inioyned him of the Father. And like as in the Lawe, the full restoring of all things, righteousnes and felicitie is promised by the Messia: so at this daye all the same is more clerely expressed in the Gospell. Therefore Iesus cannot bee receiued as Christ, but that saluation bee asked of him, seeing that to this ende he is sent of the Father, and dayly offered vnto vs. Wherevpon the Apostle doth worthely pronounce all them to be borne of God, which doe truly beleeue. For fayth is set far aboue the capacitie of the wit of man: that it behoueth vs to be drawen of the heauenly Father vnto Christ: because that neuer anie of vs could of our owne indeauour ascend vnto him. And this is that which the same Apostle teacheth in ỹ first chapter of his gospel, That they are not borne of blood, neither of flesh, which beleeue in the name of the onely begotten. And Paul saith, ỹ we are not indued with ỹ spirit of this world, but with ỹ spirit which is of God, that we may knowe what things are giuē vnto vs of him, because neither eie hath seene, nor eare hath heard,

nor

nor vnderstanding conceiued what reward is laide vp in store for them that loue God but onely the spirite hath attained to that secrete. Againe, forasmuch as Christ is giuen vnto vs for our sanctification, & doeth bring also wt him the spirit of regeneration. Finally, forasmuch as hee doth ingrafte vs into his bodie: this also is another reason, why no man can haue faith vnlesse he be borne of God.

Doth loue him which is begotten. Augustine and certaine other of the olde writers did drawe this vnto Christ: but falsly. For vnder the singular number the Apostle noteth all the faithfull. And the Text doeth plainely shew, that he hath no other purpose, but ỹ he may deriue mutuall loue towardes the brethren from faith, as from ỹ fountaine. And the argument is taken from the common order of nature. But he transferreth ỹ vnto God, which is seene in men. And it is to be noted, that the Apostle doeth not therefore speake of the faithfull onely, passing by them which are without, because they onely are to be beloued, and that no care or consideration is to be had of the other: but he doeth teach vs by this instruction to loue al men without exception, seeing he doth bidde vs to beginne

with

ith the godly.

2 In this we knowe. In these wordes briefly sheweth what is true loue, to wit, hat which is referred vnto God. Hetherto he ath taught, that the true loue of God is no where, but where the brethren are loued al- because this is a perpetual effect. And now e teacheth that men are loued aright, and in der, when as God hath the first place. And his definition is necessarie. For it commeth ften to passe, that we doe loue men without God, as prophane and carnal friendship doth end to no other end, then to priuate commo- itie, or other vaine respectes. Therefore as efore he vsed the effect, so now he vseth ȳ ause. For his meaning is, that mutuall loue e so had in account among vs, that God bee referred. He ioyneth with the loue of God, he obseruation of the lawe: and worthely. For seeing we loue God as the Father and Lord, it cannot be but that reuerence bee ioy- ned with loue. Further, God cannot be sepa- rated from himselfe. Therefore seeing hee is the fountaine of all iustice and vprightnesse: it is necessarie that he which loueth him, doe frame all his affections to the obedience of righteousnesse. Therefore the loue of God is no idle thing. But we gather also out of this

place,

place, what is the true obseruation of the lawe. For if we obeye God in keeping his commaundementes, inforced onely by feare, we are far of from true obedience. Therefore this is first, that our harts do auow theselues vnto God in a free reuerence: and then let the life bee framed vnto the rule of the Lawe. This is the meaning of Moses, Deu. 10. 12. When in gathering the summe of the lawe, hee sayth: Israel, what doeth the Lorde thy God require of thee, but that thou loue him, and obey him.

3 His commaundements are not greeuous. This is added, least the hardnesse (as it commeth to passe) doe disable or diminish our indeauour. For they which enter a godly and holye life with a cheerefull minde, and great zeale, and after hauing experience of their owne inabilitie, doe ware slowe. Therfore Iohn that he maye stirre vp our indeauours, denieth that the commaundements of God are greeuous. But it may be obiected on the contrary, that we haue experience of a far other thing: and the Scripture doth also witnesse, that the yoke of the lawe is not to bee borne. Act. 15. 10. The reason also is manyfest. For seeing the denying of our selues, is as it were an entraunce to keepe the Lawe,

shall

shal we say that it is an easie thing for a man to deny himselfe? Yea rather, for as much as the lawe is spirituall, as Paul teacheth Rom. 7.14. & we are nothing but fleshy, there must needs be a great strife betwixt vs & the lawe of God. I answere: that this hardnesse is not of the nature of the Lawe, but of the fault of our faith, which Paule also plainelye expresseth: because after that he sayd that it is impossible for the law to giue vs righteousnes, he by and by layeth the fault vpon the flesh. This answere doth very wel reconcile ỳ sentences of Paul and Dauid, which in shew doe seeme much to differ. Paul maketh the lawe ỳ minister of death, he saith it worketh nothing but the wrath of God. 2. Cor. 3.7. ỳ it was giuen ỳ sinne might increase. Rom. 4.15. that it liueth that it may slaie vs. Rom. 7.10. and 13. Dauid contrarily saith, that it is sweeter vnto him then honie, and more to bee desired then golde. Psalme. 19.9. Among other praises thereof, hee setteth these, that it cheereth the heartes, it conuerteth vnto the Lords, and quickneth. But Paule compareth the law with the corrupt nature of man. Hence is that greate conflict. But Dauid teacheth, howe they are affected whome God hath begotten agayne with his Spirite.

Hence

Hence is that ſweetneſſe and delight, where-of the fleſh taſteth not. Neither truely hath Iohn ouerpaſſed this diſtinction. For leaſt anie ſhould take this generally, that the commaundements of God are not greeuous, he reſtraineth it to the children of God. Whereby he ſignifieth, that this is brought to paſſe by the power of the ſpirit, that it is not greeuous vnto vs nor troubleſome to obey God. Yet the queſtion ſeemeth not as yet to be altogether anſwered. For the faithfull howſoeuer they be gouerned by the ſpirit of God, yet they abide a hard cõbat with their fleſh: and although they ſweate, yet they ſcarce frame themſelues vnto their duetie by the halfe part. Yea, rather being ſet, as it were betweene the ſacrifice & the alter (as the ſaying is) they doe almoſt faint vnder the burthen. We doe ſee how that Paule doeth ſigh, that he is holden priſoner, and doth crie out that he is vnhappie, becauſe he cannot ſerue God freely. I aunſwere, that the lawe is called eaſie, forasmuch as being indued with heauenlye vertue, we doe ouercome the deſires of the fleſh. For howſoeuer the fleſh doth rebell, yet the faithfull doe feele that they are delighted ſo much in no other thing, as that they maye followe God.

For co-

Moreouer, it is to be noted, that Iohn doeth not speake of the bare lawe which conteineth nothing besides the commaundements: but that he ioyneth with all the fatherlye kindnesse of God, whereby the rigour of the lawe is mittigated. Therefore seeing wee knowe that wee are mercifullye pardoned of the Lorde, if our workes doe not satisfie the lawe, that doth make vs a greate deale readyer vnto obedience, as it is in Psalme. 130. 4. There is mercie with thee that thou maist bee feared. Hence then is the easinesse of the keeping the Lawe, that the faithfull staide vp by forgiuenesse, if in anye point they faile, doe not despaire. In the meane time the Apostle warneth vs, that wee must striue that wee may serue the Lord. For the whole worlde doeth stande agaynst vs, least wee shoulde goe forwarde whether God calleth vs. Therefore hee in effect shall keepe the Lawe, which shall stronglye resist the world.

4 This is the victorie. Because hee sayd that all they which are borne of God doe ouercome the worlde. Hee expresseth also the meane to ouercome. For it might bee as yet demaunded, whence is the victorie. Therefore hee placed the victorie of the whole world

in faith. An excellent place: because although Sathan doe dayly giue harde and fearefull assaultes: the spirite of God pronouncing that we are without daunger, doeth encourage vs to striue stoutly, seeing feare is taken awaie. And the time past is of more force, then the present, or the time to come. For he saith that he hath ouercome, that we may bee euen so assured as though the enimie were now put to flight. It is true indeede, that our warrefare lasteth all our lyfe, that wee haue daylye conflictes, yea, that wee haue euerie moment newe and sundrie battails on euerie side wt the enimie, but because God doth not arme vs onely for one day, and faith also is not for one daye, but a continuall worke of the holy Ghost. Wee are nowe no other wayes conquerours, then if wee had giuen the ouerthrow in the battaile. Neither yet doeth this trust bring retchlesnesse, but that we bee alwayes carefully bent vnto the battaile. For the Lord biddeth his to be assured in such sort, that yet he wil not haue them careless. Yea rather, he doeth therefore saye, that they haue ouercome, to the intent that they might fight the more couragiously and more stoutly. The name of the world is heere taken largely, for it comprehendeth whatsoe-

ner is contrarie to the spirite of God. So the wickednesse of our nature is parte of the world, all lusts, all the sleightes of Sathan, and finally, whatsoeuer doeth drawe vs from God. In so plentifull a band of men, a great waight of the battaile lyeth vpon vs: and we should euen nowe before the conflict be ouercome, and daily to be ouercommed an hundreth times, but that God did promise vs the victorie. But GOD on this condition doeth exhort vs to the conflicte, that first hee promiseth the victorie. But as this promise doth arme vs continuallye with the inuincible power of God: so on the contrarie parte, it bringeth to nothing the strength of men. Neither indeed doth the Apostle heere teach, ỹ God doth onely helpe vs, that being aided by his help, we may be able to resist: but he placeth the victorie in faith onely. And faith receiueth frō another, whereby it maye ouercome. Therfore they take from God ỹ which is due vnto him, which ascribe the victorie to their owne strength.

5 Who is he that ouercommeth the world? A reason of the former sentence, namely, that we therefore ouercome by faith, because wee borrowe strength of Christ. As also Paule sayeth: I cānne doe all thinges in him

which doth strengthen mée. Phil. 4. 13. Therfore hée in fine shall ouercome the diuell and the worlde, neyther shall hée yéelde vnto his owne flesh, who mistrusting himselfe, shall leane vppon the onelye strength of Christ. For by the name of faith, hée vnderstandeth a liuelye taking holde of Christ, which doth applie his strength and office vnto vs.

6 This is hee which came by water and bloud, Iesus Christ, not in water onely, but in water and bloud. And it is the Spirite that beareth witnesse: for as much as the Spirite is truth.

7 For there are three which beare witnesse in Heauen, the Father, the Worde, and the holie Ghost: and these three are one.

8 And there are three which beare witnesse in Earth, the Spirite, Water, and Bloud: and these three argee in one.

9 If wee receiue the witnesse of men, the witnesse of God is greater, because this is the witnesse of God which he hath witnessed of his sonne.

6 THis is hee which came. That our faith maye rest safely in Christ, hée sayth, that the whole substaunce of the shaddowes

shaddowes of the Lawe doe consist in him. Neither indeede doe I doubte but that hee doeth allude to the olde rites of the Lawe in the wordes of Water and Bloud. Further, the comparison hath this purpose, not onely that we doe knowe, that the lawe of Moses is done awaie by the comming of Christ. But that we should seeke in him the fulfilling of those thinges which the ceremonies in times past did signifie. And although there were manye figures, yet the Apostle doeth note vnder these two the whole perfection of holynesse and ryghteousnesse. For all vncleanenesse was washed awaye with water, that men should not come vnto God, but pure and cleane. In Bloud was the purging and pledge of a full reconciliation with God. But the lawe did onely shaddowe by outward signes that which was to be performed soundly and indeed by the Messia. Therfore Iohn doth fitly prowe that Iesus is the annoynted of the Lorde, promised before, because he hath brought with him wherewith hee maye sanctifie vs in all pointes. And trulye touching the bloud wherewith Christ hath pacified GOD, there is no doubt but it may bee demaunded howe he came by water. For it is not probable that this is refer-

red to Baptisme. Truly I thinke that Iohn doth heere expresse the fruit and effect of that thing which he declareth in the historie of his Gospell. For whereas there hee sayth, that water and bloud did issue out of the side of Christ, no doubt it is to bee accounted for a myracle. I doe knowe that some such thing doth naturally come vnto ỹ dead: but it came to passe by the determinate counsaile of God, that the side of Christ shoulde be a fountaine of bloud and water: that the faithfull might knowe that true cleanneſſe (whereof the olde Baptismes were figures) is assured vnto thē in him: that they might knowe also that it is fulfilled which all the sprinklings of bloud did in times past promise. Wherefore, this short diuision hath an excellent grace, because it sheweth briefly whereto the olde ceremonies did chiefly indeauour: to wit, that men beeing purged from defilings, and freed from all offences, might haue God mercifull, and might bee consecrated vnto him. Furthermore, that ỹ truth was shewed in Christ: because the lawe had nothing but the visible shaddowes. Of which thing we haue spoken more in the 9. and 10. Chapter to the Hebrewes.

It is the Spirite that beareth witnesse. In

this

this member he sheweth howe the faithfull may feele that strength of Christ, namely, because the Spirit doth certifie them: and least their faith should wauer, he addeth, that the full and sound assuraunce doth consist in the witnesse of the Spirit. For the Spirite is called truth, because the authoritie therof is vndoubted, and ought sufficiently to content vs.

7 There are three in heauen. All this hath bene left out by some, Hierome thinketh that that was done of malice rather then of error: and truely of the Latines onely. But seeing that neither indeede the Greeke copies doe agree betweẽ thẽselues, I dare scarce affirme any thing: yet because ỹ the text doth run very well, if this part be added, & I see that it is had in the best and most allowed copies: I do willingly receiue it, & the sence shal be, ỹ god to the end he may more plentifully confirme our faith in Christ, doth by a three fold meanes witnesse, that we must rest in him. For as our faith doth acknowledge three persons in one being of God, so it is called vnto Christ by so many meanes, that it may rest it selfe in him. Whereas he saith that three are one, it is not referred vnto ỹ being, but rather vnto the consent. As if he should saye, that the

Fa-thy. Father,

Father, and his euerlasting worde, and the Spirite, doe with one consent equallye approue Christ. Therefore some bookes haue [Eis En] that is, Into one. But, although thou readest [En Eisen] that is, Are one, as it is in other Copies, yet there is no doubt, but that the Father, the Word, and the Spirite, are sayd to be one, in the selfe same sence, in which afterwards, Bloud, Water, and the Spirite. But whereas the Spirite, which is one witnesse, is twice rehearsed: the repetition seemeth to be vnfit. I answere: Seing he doth witnesse diuersly of Christ, that a double place of witnessing is fitlye giuen vnto him. For the Father, with his euerlasting wisedome and the Spirite, doeth pronounce from heauen as by his absolute power, ý Iesus is Christ. Therefore in ý place the onely maiestie of his diuinitie is to be considered of vs: and bicause ý spirit dwelling in our harts is the earnest, pledge, and seale, to seale vp that decree: by this meanes he speaketh againe in earth by his grace. But because it may be, that all men will not receiue this reading: I will so expound those words that follow, as if the Apostle had named these only witnesses on earth.

8 Are three. He applyeth nowe that sen-

sentence of water and bloud, to his purpose, namely, that they haue no excuse which refuse Christ: forasmuch as he hath proued with sufficient strong and plaine witnesses, that it is he which was promised long before. For bloud and water, seeing that they are pledges and effects of saluation brought by him, do truly witnesse that he is sent of God. Further the Holy Ghost is added as a third witnesse, whome notwithstanding hath the first place: because otherwise water and bloude shoulde haue issued without profit. For it is he which doth seale vp in our hearts the witnesse of water and bloud: it is he, which bringeth to passe by his power, that the fruite of the death of Christ doth come vnto vs: yea rather, that bloud being shed for our redemption, doth pearce euen vnto our soules: or, (that I may speake all in one worde) it causeth that Christ with all his benefits is ours. So Paule Rom. 1.4. After ý he had sayd that Christ was shewed to bee the sonne of God, by the power of his resurrection, doeth immediatly adde by the sanctifieng of the Spirite. Because whatsoeuer tokens of the heauenly glorie doeth shine in Christ: they shoulde bee neuer the lesse darke vnto vs, and should bee farre from our sight, vnlesse the spirite did

open vnto vs the eyes of faith. Now the readers do vnderstand, why Iohn hath brought the spirite as witnesse with water & bloud: namely because it is the proper office of the Spirite, to make cleane our consciences by the bloude of Christ: and to cause, that the cleansing brought by him, is effectuall in vs.

Of which thing ther is something spoken in the beginning of the first Epistle of Peter, chap. 1. verse. 22. where Peter vseth almost the same speach: to wit, that the holy Ghost doeth purge our soules by the sprinkeling of the bloud of Christ. But by these words we may gather, that faith doth not take holde of Christ bare or naked: but with all his quickening power. For what profite were it that Christ, was sent into the earth, vnlesse he had pacified God by the sacrifice of his death: vnlesse the office of cleansing had bene inioyned him of his father? yet it may be obiected that the distinction is superfluous, which is here set downe, because Christ by putting awaye sinne, hath made vs cleane. Therefore the Apostle nameth one thing twice. I graunt indeede, that in the putting awaye of sinne, there is also included a washing.

Therefore I haue not set a difference of

water and bloud, as though they wer diuers things. But if euery one of vs dw weigh his owne weakenesse, he shall easelye acknowledge, that bloud is not in vaine or without cause discerned from water.

Further, as it hath bene alreadie saide, the Apostle alludeth vnto the Rytes of the Lawe. But God did in times paste institute, not onely Sacrifice but also washings because of the weaknesse of man. The Apostle wouldе plainelye expresse that the truth of both parts was offered vs in Christ. By which reason, he sayde a little before, Not in water onely. For hee doth signifie that not onelye some parte of our saluation is founde in Christ, but also all partes full, so that nothing more is to be sought otherwhere.

9 If the witnesse of men. He reasoneth from the lesse to the greater, howe vnthankfull men are, if they refuse Christ approued from heauen, so as he hath said. For, if in mens affaires we dw rest in the wordes of men, which can lye and deceiue, how vnseemly shall it be, that God hath lesse credit with vs, in his owne matters, wherein he is the chiefe Judge. Therefore onely iniquitie doth

let

let, that we receiue not Christ, when as hée giueth credite to his power by a lawfull proofe. Further, he calleth the witnesse of God, not onely that which the Spirite doth giue into our harts, but that also which we haue from water & bloud. For that power of purging and putting away sinne, was not earthly but heauenly. Wherefore the bloud of Christ is not to be estéemed after the common manner of men: but we must rather respect the purpose of God, wherein it was ordained to put awaye sinne, and that heauenlye power, which hath flowed from thence.

Further, this is the witnesse of God, which he hath testified of his sonne.

10 He that beleeueth on the sonne of God, hath the witnesse in himselfe. Hee that beleeueth not God, hath made him a lyer: because he beleeued not the witnesse which god hath testified of his sonne.

11 And this is the witnes, that God hath giuen vs eternall life. And this life is in his sonne.

12 He that hath the sonne, hath life. He that hath not the sonne of God hath not life.

10 THis is the witnesse. The note [Oti] doth not note heere a cause, but is onely taken in the way of exposition. For after that the Apostle had taught that God doth deserue much more credite then men: now he addeth that we can giue no creditte vnto God, but by beléeuing in Christ: because God doth set him onely before vs, and doth stay vs in him. Hence he gathereth that we do beléeue in Christ safely and with quiet mindes, because God doth establish our faith by his owne authoritie. Neither doth he say that God doth speake outwardly, but that euery one of the godly doth féele him the Authour of his faith inwardly in himselfe. Whereby it appeareth how much an inconstant opinion which hangeth vppon some other thing, doth differ from faith.

10 He that doth not beleeue. As the faithfull haue this commoditie, ý they know themselues to be without daunger of errour, because they are grounded vppon God: so he maketh the vngodly guiltie of great blasphemie, because they accuse God of a lie. Truely nothing is more precious vnto God then his truth: wherfore no greater iniury cã be done vnto him, then when he is spoyled of this honor. Therfore ý he may stur vs vp to beléeue,

he

he taketh an argument frō the contrarie. For if it be an horrible and cursed wickednesse, to make God a liar: because then, that which is most proper vnto him is taken awaie: who would not feare to abase the credit of the gospell: wherein God will especially be accounted true and faithfull: This is dilligently to be noted. Some meruaile why God doth so much commend faith: why vnfaithfulnesse is so sharply condemned. But hēre the infinit glorie of God is in question. For seeing he woulde giue forth a speciall shew of his truth in the Gospell, they leaue him nothing, whosoeuer refuse Christ therein offered. Wherefore that we may graunt that some man maye in some other partes of his lyfe, be equall vnto an Angell: yet his holynesse is diuellish, so long as he reiecteth Christ. As we see certaine in the Papacie much to flatter themselues with I know not what visor of holinesse: when as yet they resist the Gospell most obstinatly. Therefore let vs holde, that this is the beginning of godlynesse, obediently to imbrace that doctrine which hee hath so faythfullye auouched for a witnesse.

11 That hee hath giuen eternall lyfe.

Now

howe hée allureth vs to beléeue, by setting before vs the profite thereof. This reuerence indéede is due vnto GOD, that whatsoeuer hée sayeth to vs, it be by and by without controuersie. But whereas he offereth vs lyfe frælye, it is an vnthankfulnesse intollerable, if we dw not receyue so louing and sweete a doctrine with a most stedfast and ready faith.

And truly the wordes of the Apostle haue this drift, that we must not onely reuerently obeye the Gospell, least wée doe iniurye vnto God: but also that it is to bée beloued, because it bringeth vnto vs eternall lyfe. From whence also wée dw gather, what is chiefely and most of all to be sought for in the Gospell of Christ, to wit, the frée guift of eternall redemption and saluation. For séeing God of his gwdnesse doth there exhorte vs vnto repentaunce and feare, it ought not to be separated from the grace of Christ. And that the Apostle maye staye and detaine vs whollye in the eternall grace of Christ, he repeateth vnto vs again, that euerlasting life is contained in him alone: as if hée should haue sayde, that there is no other meanes at all set dowre vnto vs by GOD

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the father to obtaine life. And indeede the Apostle hath briefly heere comprehended three things, to wit that we are all appoynted vnto death, vntill God of his free goodnesse do restore vs to life. For he plainly sayth, that lyfe is giuen by God. Whereby also it followeth that we are disappoynted of it, and that it cannot be gotten by deserts. Further he teacheth that this life is giuen vnto vs by the Gospell, because there is layde open the goodnesse and fatherly loue of God towardes vs. Lastly he saith, that we are by no other meanes made pertakers of that lyfe, then when we are ingrafted into Christ by faith.

12 He that hath not. It is a confirmation of the sentence going before. Indeed that ought to suffice, that God hath placed lyfe no where els but in Christ, that it maye be sought for frō thence. But least any man should decline another way, he shutteth out all men from the hope of life, which seeke it not in Christ. We knowe what it is to haue Christ: for he is possessed by faith. Therefore he depriueth all men of life, which are not of the bodie of Christ. But this seemeth not to agree with reason. For histories do shew, that there haue bene excellent men, and indued with noble vertues, which not-

notwithstanding haue ben altogether strangers from Christ. And it seemeth vnfit, to giue no honour vnto so great excellencie.

I aunswere: that we are farre deceiued, if we thinke that whatsoeuer doth creel in our eyes is allowed of God. Yea rather, as it is in Luke 16.15. that which is excellent in the sight of men, is abhominatiō before God. For because the vncleannesse of the heart is vnknowen vnto vs, we are content with the outward shew. But God doth see most filthy wickednesse lying hid vnder the same. Therfore it is no mernaile if those vertues which beare an outward shew, do stink before him, which both procēde from an vncleane heart, and also tende not to a good ende. Further, whence is the cleannesse of the heart, whence is a good indeauour of godlinesse, but from the spirite of Christ? Then nothing is worthie of praise, but in Christ. Although ther is another reason, which taketh away al doubt. For the righteousnesse of men, consisteth in the forgiuenesse of sinnes. If thou take away this, the vndoubted curse of God, and euerlasting death, remaineth for vs all, and it is onely Christ, which reconcileth the father vnto vs, as he hath once pacified him by the sacrifice of his death.

Whence it followeth, that God is mercifull to man, but in Christ: and that there is no righteousnesse but in him. If any man obiect Cornelius, whō Luke witnesseth to be acceptable vnto god, before that he was called to the faith of the gospel: I aunswere briefely, that God doth sometimes so worke in vs, that the seede of faith, doth not by and by the first day appeare. Cornelius had not a cleere and plaine knowledge of Christ: but seeing he was indued with some feeling of the mercy of God, he must withall holde some thing of the mediator. But, because God hath secrete and wonderfull meanes to worke by, let vs, passing by the shewes that profite not, holde fast only the plaine way to saluation which he sheweth vs.

13 I haue written these things vnto you, which beleeue in the name of the sonne of God, that ye may know that you haue eternall life, and that you may beleeue in the name of the sonne of God.

14 And this is the trust which wee haue in him, that if we shall aske anye thing according to his will he heareth vs.

15 And if we know that hee heareth vs,

when

when we shall aske any thing: we know that we haue the petitions that wee haue asked of him.

13 I Haue written these thinges vnto you. Because there must bee a continuall going forward in faith, therefore he saith, that he writeth to them which haue alreadie beleeued, that they may more stedfastly and certainly beleeue: and so may enioye the full assurance of eternal life. Therfore, this is the vse of the doctrine, not onelye that he may beginne the ignorant in Christ, but also ỹ he may more & more cõfirm those, which are alredie taught. Therfore we must euery day diligently indeuour to learn, that our faith may increase all our life long. For both many remnaunts of vnbeleefe dw as yet remaine in vs, and also our faith is so weak, that euen this that we dw beleeue, is not yet to beleeue soundly, vnles there come a greater confirmation. Furthermore it is worth the labour to note, what is the true meanes to confirme faith; to wit, when the office and power of Christ is declared. For the Apostle saith, that he did write these things: namely, that eternall life is not to be sought anye wher els but in Christ: ỹ they which are now

faithfull may beleeue, that is, may profitte by beleeuing.

Wherefore it is the duetie of a godly teacher, that he may confirme his hearers in the faith, to set forth as much as he can the grace of Christ, that being content therewith, we desire nothing els. Seeing ỳ Papists do hide and abase this by all meanes: they do bewray by this one thing sufficiently, that they haue care of nothing lesse, then of the right doctrine of Faith. Yea for this cause, their schooles are more to be auoyded, then al rocks or quick-sands: because a man can scarce enter into them, without vndoubted shipwrack of faith. Moreouer, the Apostle teacheth in this place, that Christ is the proper scope of faith: and that the assurance of saluation is ioyned with the faith which we haue in his name. For this is the ende of beleeuing, that we may be the children, and heires of God.

14 This is the trust. He commendeth the faith whereof he spake, by the fruite: or he doth shewe wherein our trust doth chiefely consist: to wit, that the godly are bolde to call vpon God with a bolde courage, as Paul also speaketh, Ephe. 3. 12. That by faith we haue accesse vnto God with boldnesse. And Rom. 8. 15. that the Spirite doeth open our

mouths,

mouths, that we doubt not to crye Abba Father. And truly if we be kept from comming to God, nothing is more miserable, then wee. Againe, so this sanctuarie may be opened for vs, we shal be neuertheleſſe blessed in all our miseries. Yea, this one thing maketh all our miseries happie, that we are certainlye perſwaded, that God will be our deliuerer, and trusting in his fatherly good will towardes vs, we flye vnto him. Let vs therefore holde this sentence of the Apostle, that calling vpon God, is the especiall triall of our faith: and that God is not called vpon a right, neither according vnto faith, but when as wee are perſwaded that our prayers shall not be in vayne. For the Apostle doth denie, that they are indued with confidence, which hang in doubt. Whereby it appeareth, that the doctrine of faith, is buried and almoſt quenched in the Papacie, where all certaintie is taken away. Indeede they murmure manye prayers there, and they prate much of calling vpon God: but they pray, & bid to pray with doubtfull and wandring mindes: yea, they condemne this truſt, which the Apostle doth necessarily require.

According to his will. By this note hee would briefely teach, what is the true rule

to pray: to wit, when men submit their prayers vnto God. Neither indeede when as the Lord did promise that he would doo, whatsoeuer his should require, did he graunt vnto them an vnbridled libertie to aske whatsoeuer came into their minde: but he gaue them withall a lawe to praye aright. And truely there is nothing more profitable for vs, then this bridle: because if it be lawfull for euerie one of vs to aske whatsoeuer he list, and God doo fauour our prayers, we shall be very ill prouided for. For we know not what is profitable: yea, we doo boyle with wicked and hurtfull desires. But God doth giue a double remedie, that we pray not otherwise then according to the precise rule of his will: because he doth both teach vs by his worde, what he wil haue vs to aske, and also he doeth appoynt his spirite our guide and gouernour, which may stay our affections, and not suffer them to wander without their bounds. For we know not, saith Paul, what and how we ought to pray: but the spirite helping our infirmities, doth stirre vp in vs vnspeakable sighings, Rom. 8. 26. In the meane time also we must aske at the mouth of the Lord, that he will direct our praiers. For God in his promises doth set downe vn-

to

to vs the lawful meanes to pray, as hath ben said.

15 And if we knowe. The repetition is not needlesse, as in shew it seemeth. For the Apostle now specially affirmeth, that which he generally pronounced of ỹ successe of praier, that the godly do wish or desire nothing of God, which they do not obtaine, and when as he saith, that all the prayers of the faithfull are heard, he speaketh of sound and modest prayers, and which are framed according to the rule of obedience. For the faithfull do not runne headlong with lose raines or graunt themselues any thing: but they alwayes in their praiers regard what God commandeth. Therefore this is the applying of the generall doctrine to the spirituall and priuate vse of euery man: that the faithfull do not doubt that they haue God fauourable in all and euery their praiers, that they may with quiet mindes waite vntill ỹ Lord performe those things which they haue prayed for: and so being eased of all griefe and care, they cast their cares vpon God.

Neither yet this quietnesse and assurance, ought to quench in vs the zeale of prayer: that he which is assured of an happie successe, should therefore abstaine from calling

vpon God. For the certaintie of faith doth not bring forth vntowardnesse or slacknes. But the Apostle onely meaneth that euery man be quiet minded in his necessities, when he hath laid downe his gronings, in the bosome of God.

16 If any man shall see his brother sinne a sinne not vnto death, let him aske, and hee shall giue him life. I say to him that sinneth not vnto death. There is a sinne vnto death. For that I say not that a man should pray.

17 Euery vnrighteousnesse is sinne. And there is a sinne not vnto death.

18 We knowe, that whosoeuer is borne of God, sinneth not: but hee that is borne of God keepeth himselfe, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

16 The Apostle now ertendeth further the fruite of faith, whereof hee had made mention, that our prayers also bee auaileable for our brethren. That was a great matter, that so soone as we are in distresse, God doth louingly call vs vnto himselfe, and is ready to giue vs helpe: but in that he vouchsafeth to heare vs praying for others also, there ariseth no small confirma-

tion

tion vnto our faith, that we maye be assured that in our owne cause we shal neuer take the repulse. In the meane time the Apostle doth exhort vs, that one of vs be mutuallye carefull for the safetie of another. And again he willeth, that the falls of our brethren, be vnto vs prouocations to pray. And in truth, this hardnesse were passing great, to be touched with no sense of compassion, when wee see the soules which are redeemed with the bloud of Christ, perish. And he sheweth that there is a remedie at hand, whereby brethren may helpe their brethren He shall giue life he saith, to him that is readie to perish, that shall pray for him.

Albeit the word, He shall giue, may be referred to God: as if it had bene sayde, God shall graunt the life of our brethren to our prayers. But the sense shall be one still, that so farre forth the prayers of the faithfull are auaileable, that they maye deliuer a brother from death. If thou dost vnderstande it of man, that he doth giue life vnto his brother, the speach will be hyperbolicall: yet it will containe no vnseemly thing. For that which is giuen vnto vs by the free grace of god: yea that which for our sake is graunted vnto others, we are sayd to giue vnto others.

So great a profite ought not to moue vs a lyttle, to pray that our bretherens sins may be forgiuen them. And when the Apostle cõmendeth vnto vs [Sumpathian] a compassion, he doth withall admonish, how much we are to take heede of crueltie in condemning our bretheren, and too much sharpnesse in despairing of their safetie.

A sinne not vnto death. Least immediately we cast away all hope of their safetye which sinne, he sheweth that God doth not so seuerely punish their faults, that therfore he doth vtterly cast them off. Whereuppon it doth follow, that we must take them for bretheren, seeing the Lord doth receiue them in the accompt of children. But he denieth that they are sinnes vnto death, not onelye wherein the Saints do daily offend: but also if at any time it come to passe that they grieuously prouoke the wrath of God. For so long as there remayneth place to forgiuenesse, death doth not yet wholly raigne. And yet ỳ Apostle doth not here distinguish betwixte veniall and deadly sin, as afterwards was commonly done. For that distinction which preuayled in the Papacie, is most vnsauorie. The Sorbonnists acknowledge almost no sinne to be deadly, except wherein

there appeareth such grose vncleanneſſe, that it may be felt with hands. So amongſt veniall ſinnes they accompt the moſt horrible filthineſſe, which lurketh in the minde. Finally, all the fruites of originall ſin, ſo that they breake not out into externall acte, they thinke to be done away with a light ſprinkling of holy water. And what maruell when they do not accompt the blaſphemous doubtings of the grace of God, and whatſoeuer luſts and concupiſcences to be ſinne, ſo that the conſent be not withall: If the minde of man be ſhaken with vnbeléefe, if impatience do prouoke him, that he murmure agaynſt God, how much ſoeuer monſtrous luſts do moue him: all this is lighter with the papiſts, then that he be ouertaken in ſinne, at the leaſt after baptiſme. Therefore it is no maruel if of greuous offences they can make venial ſins: for they weigh thē wt their own & not with ỹ ballance of god. But among the faithful this principle muſt be vndoubted, ỹ whatſoeuer is cōtrary to ỹ law of god, is ſin, & that deadly by his own nature. For where ỹ trāſgreſſiō of ỹ law is, ther is ſin & death. Then what ſhall be the ſenſe of the apoſtles words? He denieth thoſe ſinnes to be deadly, which albeit they are worthie of death,

yet

Yet God doth not so seuerely punish them. Therefore he doth not weigh the sinnes in themselues, but he iudgeth of them according to the fatherly kindnesse of God, which pardoneth the guiltinesse, where yet there was offence. Finally, he doth not giue thē ouer to death, ý God hath restored to life by raising them againe, albeit they letted not why they should not haue ben shut out from life.

There is a sinne vnto death. I haue sayd alreadie that sinne is called so, whereto there is lefte no hope of forgiuenes. But it is demaunded what manner of sinne that is. For it must nedes be very greuous, which God so seuerely punisheth. It may be gathered by the course of the text, that the fall was not in part, as they say, nor the transgression of one precept: but a generall falling away, where by men do vtterlye estraunge themselues from God. For ý apostle addeth afterwards, that the sonnes of God do not sinne: that is, that they forsake not God, and giue ouer and inbondage themselues wholly vnto Sathan.

It is no meruaile if such a fallyng awaye be a deadly sinne. For God doth neuer so depriue his children of the grace of his spirite, but that they receiue some sparke of godlynesse.

nesse. Therefore they must nedes be reprobates, and giuen ouer vnto death, who so fall awaie, that they cast away the feare of God. If anie aske whether the waie of saluation be shut vp against their repentaunce: The ans were is readie, That seeing they are giuen ouer vnto a reprobate sence, and destitute of the holy Ghost, they can doe no other thing, then runne headlong into worse, and adde sinne vnto sinne. Further, seeing sinne or blasphemie against the Spirit, doth continually drawe with it such a falling awaie, there is no doubt but it is noted heere. But it is asked againe by what markes we may know that the fall of man is deadly. For except there were certaine knowledge of that thing, the Apostle shuld except in vaine, that we must not praie for that kinde of sinne. Therefore it shall bee lawfull sometimes to determine whether he be past hope that hath falne, or that there be yet place to recouerie. I graunt indeed that that is true: and it is proued without controuersie by this place. But because this cõmeth but seldly to passe, & god commending the infinit riches of his grace, commandeth vs by his example to be merciful: the iudgement of eternall death is not rashly to be giuen vppon anie man: ra-

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ther loue doth incline vs to hope well. But if the desperate wickednesse of some men do appeare vnto vs no otherwise, then if the Lord did poynt it out with the finger, there is not why we shoulde striue with the iust iudgement of God, or desire to be more fauorable then he.

17 Euery vnrighteousnesse. This place may be expoũded diuersly, for if thou resolue it into the contrarie part, the sense shall not be amisse thus, Albeit all, vnrighteousnesse is sinne, yet ther is some sin not vnto death. Another sense would also likewise agrée, Because sinne is all vnrighteousnesse: therevpon it followeth, that there is some sinne not vnto death. Others take All vnrighteousnes for whole vnrighteousnesse: as if the Apostle should haue said, that the sinne whereof hée speaketh, is an heap of vnrighteousnesse. Yet I do more willingly allowe of the first or second exposition: and because they fall both to one end, I leaue the iudgement frée to the readers, which of them be more fit.

18 We know that whosoeuer is of God. If thou takest the children of god to be altogether cleane and frée from sinne, as fantastical men do faine, the Apostle shall be contrarie to himselfe, for by this meanes, hée

should

should take away from amongst brethren the indeauour of praying. Therfore he saith they do not sinne, which fall not vtterly away from the grace of God. And hence hée would inferre, that we must pray for all the children of God: because they sinne not vnto death. The prose is added, Because euery one that is borne of God, keepeth himselfe, that is, doth keepe himselfe in the feare of God: & suffereth not himselfe so to be with violence carried away, that the sense of godlynesse béeing extinguished, he wholly giueth himselfe to the diuell and to the flesh. For when he saith, That he is not touched of that wicked one. It is to be referred to the deadly wound. For the children of GOD are not free from the woundes of Sathan: but they so beate backe his strokes with the shield of faith, that they pearce not to the very heart. Therefore the spirituall life is neuer extinguished in them. This is that Not to sinne, when the godly do indéede fall thorough the infirmitie of the flesh: but they mourne vnder the burden of sinne, they are displeased with themselues, they cease not to feare God.

Keepeth himselfe. That which is proper

to

to God, he applyeth vnto vs. For if euery of vs be the keeper of his owne saluation, it wil be a miserable defence. Therfore Christ praieth his father that he wil keep vs. Iohn. 17. 11 signifieng that this is not in our power. The defenders of free will snatch vp this speech, that they might therby proue, that wee are deliuered from sinne, partly by the grace of God, and partly by our owne power. But they doe not obserue, that the faithfull haue not of themselues the keeping whereof the Apostle speaketh. For indeede doth he here publish their strength, as if they did keepe themselues by their owne power: but onely he teacheth that they resist Satan, that they be neuer deadly wounded with his dartes. And we know that we are neuer prepared to battaile with anie other armour then the armour of God. Let therefore the faithfull keepe themselues from sinne, euen as they are kept of God.

19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lyeth in wickednesse.

20 But we know that the sonne of God is come, and hath giuen vs a minde to knowe him, which is true: and we are in him which is true: in his sonne Iesus Christ, This is true God

God, and life eternall.

21 Little children keep your selues from Idolls. Amen.

19 WE are of God. By the former doctrine he taketh occasion to exhort, for that which he had sayd in common of all the children of God, he now applyeth to them vnto whom he wrote: and that, that hee might pricke them forward to auoyde sinne, and incourage them to withstande the assaultes of Sathan. Let the readers note, that this indeed is true faith, which applieth (that I may speake so) the grace of God vnto vs. For the Apostle doth not acknowledge anye other to be faithfull, excepte such as assemble themselues into the order of the children of God. Neither indeede doth he alledge, a probable coniecture, as the schoolemen speake, for trust. For he saith, That we knowe. The summe hath this drifte, Seeing we are borne of God, that we must indeauour our selues, that beeing seperated from the world, we may proue by holinesse of life, that we are not in vaine called to so great dignitie. And this admonition is very needfull to all ỹ godly. For whether soeuer they turne their eyes, Satan hath readie enticements, whereby he maye drawe

them from God. Therefore it would be hard for them to holde a right course, except their calling were more of account with them, then all worldly lets. Therefore that we maye be rightly armed to fight, these two must be holde: That the world is wicked: and that our calling is of God. Under the name of the World, there is no doubt but ſ Apoſtle comprehendeth all mankinde. When he ſayth, It lyeth in wickednesse: he plaieth it vnder the gouernment of Satan. There is no cause therefore, why we ſhould doubt to ſhunne the world, which contemning God, doth caſte it ſelfe into the bondage of Satan: ther is not, why we ſhould feare the diſagreement ther of, becauſe it is a ſtraunger from God. Finally, ſeing corruption poſſeſſeth the whole nature, the faithfull muſt ſtudie to denie themſelues. Seeing that in the worlde there is nothing ſeene but iniquitie and wickednesse, it is of neceſſitie, that they giue the farewell to fleſh and bloude, that they may followe God. Yet that other muſt together be added, That it is god who hath called them, that they might ſet his ayde againſt all the aſſaults of the world and of Satan.

20 But we knowe that the ſonne of God is come. Becauſe the children of God are

aſſailed

assailed euery way, he doth as we haue sayde incourage and exhort them by this meanes to a constant resistaunce, because they fight vnder the conduct of God, & do certainly knowe that they are gouerned by his spirite. And now he sheweth, from whēce that knowledge is chiefely to be fetched. He saieth therefore, ỳ God is so made knowen vnto vs in Christ, that now there is no cause of doubting. The Apostle doth not rashly incline into this part. For except our faith were soundly grounded in God, we shall neuer remaine constant in the conflict. For this cause the Apostle teacheth, that by the benefite of Christ we haue attained vnto an assured knowledge of ỳ true God, that we wauer not vnstaide. The True God, he vnderstandeth not him that is true, but him who in very deede is God: that hee may discerne him from all Idolls. For it is, [Alethinos,] not [Alethes.] As Iohn. 17. 35. This is life eternall, that they know thee the very true God and whom thou hast sent, Iesus Christ, that he maye lighten our mindes to the knowledge of God. For seeing he is the very image of the inuisible God, seeing the onely interpreter of the father, seeing the onely giuer of life: yea life, the light of ỳ world, and truth, so soone as we depart from him, it

is of necessitie ỹ we banish away in our own inuentions. But Christ is sayd, To haue giuen vs vnderstanding, not onelye because he sheweth by the doctrine of the Gospel who is the true God, & doth also inlighten vs with his spirit: but because we haue in Christ himselfe God manifested in ỹ flesh, as Paul saith. Euen as all fulnesse of the Godhead doeth dwell in him, 1. Tim. 3. 16. And all the treasures of knowledge and wisedome are hidde, Col. 2. 3. and 9. So it commeth to passe, that the open face of God, after a sorte doeth shine vnto vs in Christ. Not that there was none, or a doubtfull knowledge of God before the comming of Christ: but because now he hath manifested himselfe more fully, & as it wer in a meruailous clearenes. And this is ỹ which Paul saith. 2. Cor. 4. 6. That god who in time past commaunded the light to shine out of darknesse, in the creation of the worlde, hath now shined in our hearts by the light of the knowledge of his glorie in the face of Christ. And we must note, that this gifte is peculiar to Gods elect onely. Christ indeede hath indifferently set forth to al, the light of his gospell, but al haue not seeing mindes to behold: but rather Satan doth spredde the vaile of blindnesse before the eyes of many. Therfore

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the apostle vnderstãdeth ỹ light which Christ kindleth within the harts of his children, and which once being kindled is neuer put out, albeit at some times it come to passe in some that it be hindered for a time.

We are in him which is true. By this word he doth teach, how effectual that knowledge is, whereof he hath made mention: that is, because by it we are grafted into Christ, & made one with God. For it hath a liuelye rote, and truly setled in our hearts, whereby it commeth to passe, that God liueth in vs, & we in him. Because he saith without note of coupling together, We are in him that is true, in his sonne, he seemeth to expresse the manner of our coniunction with God: as if hee should haue saide: That we are in God by Christ.

This same is very God. Albeit the Arrians haue gone about to abuse this place, and certaine at this daye subscribe vnto them: yet heere we haue an excellent witnesse of the diuinitie of Christ. The Arrians referre this to the Father, as if the Apostle should again say that hee were true God. But the repetition should be too fruitlesse. He had twice alreadie testified ỹ he was the true God, who appered vnto vs in Christ: to what ende should hee

by and by adde, This is true God? But it agreeth fitly vnto Christ. For after that he had taught, that Christ was the guide by whose direction we were led vnto God: nowe, for amplification sake he affirmeth, that Christ is that God, least we should thinke, that he is to be sought a farre off. And the Epethite, Of eternall life, confirmeth the same. Andede he speaketh both of one and the same that he is true God, and eternall life. I omit, that ỳ relative [Outos] he vseth to be restrained to ỳ next person. This I say, that Christ is properly called eternall life; & it cannot be denied, that this manner of speaking is vsuall with Iohn. The summe is, when we haue Christ, that we enioy the true and eternall God: because he is no other where to be sought. Then that we are so made partakers of eternal life, because being hidde in the father, it is offered vs in Christ. The father indeed is the beginning of life: but the fountaine from whence we may draw it, is Christ.

21 Little children keepe your selues from Idolls. Albeit it is a seuerall sentence, yet it is that which hangeth vppon the former doctrine. For the quickening light of the gospel must not onely scatter and driue awaye the darknesse, but also all cloudes out of ỳ minds

of

of the godly. And the Apostle doth not onely condemne idolatrie, but he commandeth that they take hæde vnto themselues of the idolls themselues. Whereby he signifieth, that the sound and sincere worship of God cannot be kept, so sone as men begin to haunt images. For so is superstition bred in vs, that euery least cause doth infect vs with the poyson of it. Drie wode will not so sone burne, being laid vpon the coales, as idolatrie wil sone infect and possesse the mindes of men, when occasion is offered them. Who seeth not that Images are sparks? Why do I cal thē sparks? Yea rather fire-brands, which may suffice to set the whole world on fire. Albeit the Apostle doth not speake onely of images: but he comprehendeth the altars, & all instrumentes of superstition. Further, the Papists are ridiculous, who wrest this to the pictures of Iupiter and Mercurie and such like: as if indeed the Apostle doth not generally teach, that it is a corrupting of godlines, where there is vnto God imagined a bodely shape, or where images & pictures are set vp to worship. Let vs therfore remember, that we must so carefull continue in ỹ spiritually worship of God, that we driue far away from vs, whatsoeuer may bend vs to grose & carnall superstitions.

FINIS.

The Cometaries of M. Iohn Caluin, vpon the Epistle of Iude.

The Argument.

ALthough the Olde writers haue diuersly contended cõcerning this Epistle, yet because it is profitable to bee reade, neither doeth it containe any thyng, contrary vnto the soundenesse of the doctrine of the Apostles, and hath receiued authoritie of long tyme emong all good men, I doe willyngly nomber it among the reste. Further, the shortnesse thereof doth not require any long treatise of argument: and the whole some almost doeth agree with the second Chaper of the last Epistle. For, because that wicked vnthriftes had crept in, vnder the name of Christianitie, whose whole delite was to drawe light and weake men, into a prophane cõtempt of ij. Peter. ij.

The Argument.

God. Iude doeth first shewe, that the faithfull ought not to be daunted with suche engines, with whiche the Churche hath alwaies been assailed: And yet he exhorteth them, that thei doe carefully take heede of suche plagues, and that he maie make them the more hated and abhorred, he dooeth sharplie denounce against them, the punishment of God at hande, suche as their wickednesse deserueth. Now, if wee consider what Sathan hath gone aboute in this our age also, from the beginnyng of the Gospell: with what subtilties he doeth yet busie himself to ouerthrowe the Faithe and feare of God: That warnyng whiche was profitable for the tyme wherein Iude liued, is more then necessary for our time.

But all this shall bee better learned, by the readyng of the Epistle.

1 *Iude a seruaunt of Iesus Christ, and brother to Iames, to them whiche are called and sanctified in God the Father, and kept in Iesus Christ.*

2 *Mercie vnto you, and peace and loue bee multiplied.*

HE calleth hym selfe the seruaunt of Christ, not as this name doeth indifferentlie agree vnto all the godlie, but in respecte of his Apostleship. For thei are speciallie accompted the seruauntes of Christ, to whom he hath appointed some publique office. And wee knowe to what ende, the Apostles vse to dignifie theim selues with this title. He doeth not righlely arrogate to himself, the right and authoritie of teachyng who soeuer is not called. Therefore, their calling is a witnesse vnto the Apostles, that thei doe not thrust in themselues, of their owne priuate vaine. Although this alone were not sufficient of it self, that thei are placed in office, vnlesse thei did behaue them sel-

ues faithfullie in thesame. And truelie he comprehendeth bothe, whiche saieth, that he is the seruaunt of God: to witte, that he hath GOD the aucthour of the function, which he exerciseth, and also that he doeth faithfullie execute that whiche is enioyned hym. And because verie many doe fallie pretende this title, and doe falsly boste them selues to bee that, whiche thei are moste farre from, wee muste alwaies see whether the thyng it selfdooe agree with the profession.

Brother of James, He addeth a name, whiche was more knowne and renoumed to the Churche. For although the credite and authoritie of doctrine, doeth hang vpon no mortall man, yet this is a greate staie vnto faithe, when as the soundenesse of the man is knowne vnto vs, whiche is the teacher. And that the authoritie of James, is not here pretended, as of some priuate manne: but because that among all men, he was taken to be vnto the Churche one of the cheef Apostles of Christe. And he was the Soune of *Alpheus*, as I haue saied in an other place. Yea, this place ma-

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keth for me against *Eusebius* and others, who write that a Disciple, I knowe not who called *Oblia*, was he of whom *Luke* speaketh in the *Actes 15.13. & 21.18.* which was more excellent then the Apostles in that Churche. But there is no doubte, but Jude doeth call hym here his Brother, because he was famous amongest the Apostles. Therefore it is likely that it was he, vnto whom *Luke* telleth, that there was speciall honour giuen by the reste. *To thē whiche are called in God.* He noteth all the faithfull by this name, because that the Lorde hath seperated them vnto hym self. But because callyng is nothyng, but the effecte of the eternall election, it is sometimes taken for it. In this place in skilleth little, whether waie thou doe expounde it. For in deede he commendeth the grace of God, whereby he vouchsafeth to chuse thē vnto hymself for a peculiar people.

And he signifieth that men doe not preuent God, neither at any tyme doe come vnto hym, vntill he drawe them. He calleth theim also sanctified in God the Father, whiche wee maie translate by God

the Father. Yet I haue kept that forme of speeche, that the readers might haue their free iudgement. For, this also maie be the sense, that beyng prophane in themselues, thei haue sanctification in God. Further, the maner of Sanctification is, when he doeth regenerate vs by his Spirite. The other readyng that the cõmon interpreter hath followed, is somewhat harder, ἡγαπημένοις, that is to saie, to the beloued in God the Father. Therefore I iudge that it is corrupted, and truely it is founde in fiue bookes. He addeth further, that thei are kept in Christe. For wee should be alwaies Sathans, subiecte to Death, in so muche as he would catche vs an hundreth tymes, euery momente, as a readie praie, vnlesse wee were safe vnder the defence of Christe: whom the Father hath therefore giuen vnto vs to be our keeper, that none of those thynges should bee losse, whiche he hath receiued into his Faithe and Defence. Therefore Jude doeth here shewe a threefold benefite of God in all the godly: That he hath made them pertakers of the Gospell by his callyng, that he hath rege-

nerate

nerate theim into newnesse of life by his Spirite, and that he hath kepte theim by the hande of Christe, that thei should not faile of their Saluation.

2 *Mercie vnto you.* The name of Mercie doeth signifie almoste thesame, whiche the name of Grace doeth signifie in the salutations of Paule.

If any man desire to haue a more curious difference, Grace is properly the effecte of Mercie: because that God dooeth imbrace vs with his loue, not for any other cause, but because he hath respect vnto our miseries. Loue maie be vnderstood as well of God towardes men, as of men emong them selues. If thou referre it to God, the sense shall be, that the trust of the loue of God doeth increase in them, and is established euery daie more and more in their hartes. Yet that other sense doeth not il agree also, that God do then kindle and confirme in them mutuall loue.

3 *Beloued, when I gaue all diligence to write vnto you, of the common saluation, it was needefull for mee to write vnto you to exhorte you, that*

you ſhould earneſtly contende for the maintenaunce of that faithe, which was once giuen vnto the Saincte.

4 *For there are certaine men crept in which before of old were ordained to this condemnation: vngodlie men thei are, whiche tourne the grace of our God into wantonneſſe, and deny God the onely Lorde and our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte.*

3 WHen I gaue all diligence. I haue tranſlated the Greke σπουδὴν ποιούμενος vſyng diligence, it ſoundeth wooꝛde foꝛ wooꝛde to dooe diligence. Further, many interpꝛeters doe open this ſeutence thus: That an earneſt endeuour did enforce Iude to wꝛite. As wee are wont to ſaie, that thei whiche doe burne with ſome earneſt deſire, can not ſtaie them ſelues, therefoꝛe accoꝛdyng to theim, there was a neceſſitie in this, that the deſire to wꝛite, did not ſuffer Iude to bee ſilent.

But I rather thinke that there are here twoo ſeuerall members. That when otherwaies he was readie enough, and care-

carefully giuen to write, necessitie also did constraine hym. He signifieth therefore, that he writeth freely and desirouslie vnto them: but yet that he was vged also with necessitie that he should doo it: Because in deede (as it followeth in the course of the texte) their beeyng assaulted of the wicked, were to bee instructed to the battell. Therefore in this first place Jude testifieth, that he had so greate a care of their Saluation, that he desired to write of his owne accorde, and that in deede withall his harte. Then, that he might stirre vp their attentiuenesse, he saith together that the matter did require it should be so. For necessitie giueth sharpe spurres. Excepte thei had been premonished, how greatelie needefull this exhortation would bee vnto them: Thei might haue been slowe and careless to read. But when he foretelleth that he doeth write, by meane of their present necessitie, it is as if he should sound a retire, to shake of their drousinesse.

Of the common Saluation. Certaine copies adde yours, but amisse, in my iudgement. For he maketh saluation cõmon

to theim with hym self. And this sorte of doctrine, whiche is to be published, giueth not a litle effecte, when one speaketh of his owne feelyng and experience. For the speeche will bee but bablyng, if wee reason of Saluation emongest other menne, whereof wee our selues haue no feelyng. Therefore Jude professeth hym self to bee a teacher, conning in practise, when in the nomber of the godlie, he dooeth assemble hym self into the fellowshipp of the same Saluation.

That I might exhorte you to striue. It is worde for worde. Exhortyng you. But when he noteth the ende of his counsell, the speeche must be resolued thus. Wheras I haue translated by striuyng to helpe the Faithe, it is as muche, as to endeuour to keepe the faithe, and to endure strongly, the contrary assaultes of Sathan. For he teacheth that to the ende, thei maie remaine stedfast in the Faithe, thei must vndergoe many conflictes, and that continuall trouble waiteth vpō them. He saith *The Faithe once giuen*. That thei maie knowe, that thei haue attained to it vpon this

this condition, that thei neuer faint, or fall awaie.

Crepte in. Albeeit that Sathan is alwaies malicious against the godlie, and therefore doeth not cease to prouoke them: yet he admonisheth them to whom he writeth, of the presente necessitie. Now, he saieth, Sathan doeth especially sett vpon you, and prouoke you. You must therefore take Armour to resist hym. Here wee gather, that a good and faithfull Pastour must wisely foresee, what the present state of the Churche doeth require, that he may thereto applie his doctrine. The woorde παρεισέδυσαν which he vseth, doeth note a sinister and secret creepyng in, whereby the ministers of Sathã deceiue the ignorant. For in the night, and when the Housbandmen slepe, Sathan doeth scatter his Tares, that he maie corrupt the pure seede of the Lorde. And together he toucheth that this is a daungerous euill. For heare also is the craftie of Sathan: to raise vp to doe hurte, those that be of the flocke, to the ende thei maie the easelier fall in.

Condemned before. He calleth the Judgement,

gement, either damnation, or a reprobate sense, whereby thei are caried to peruerte the doctrine of goodlinesse. And that can no manne doo, but to his owne destruction. Further, this Metaphour is taken from thence, whereby the eternall counsell of God (by whiche the faithfull are ordeined to Saluation) is called a booke. And when the faithfull heare, that thei are auowed to eternall death, thei ought to take heede to themselues, least thei endanger themselues with the same destruction. Albeit Iude meaneth also to meete with a perill, least the strangenesse of the matter might moue or trouble any. For, if thei were of old ordained, it followeth that the Churche is not exercised, but by the assured counsell of God.

The grace of our God. Now he sheweth more plainly, what maner of mischeef it was. For he saieth, that thei abused the grace of the Lorde, that thei might giue ouer themselues and others to an impure, and prophane libertie to sinne. But the grace of God hath appeared farre to an other ende, that is, that we should deny vn-

godlinesse,

godlinesse, and worldelie lustes, and liue soberly, iustly, and godlie in this present worlde. Let vs therfore knowe, that there is nothing more pestilent then this kinde of men, whiche by the grace of Christ, pretēde a libertie to sinne. Because we teach that by the free mercie of GOD, wee obtaine Saluation, the Papistes accuse vs of this faulte. But what auailes it to refell their impudencie with woordes: when euery where wee vrge Repentance, the feare of God, and newnesse of life: and thei doge not onely corrupte the whole worlde with moste vile examples, but also thei take from the worlde, by their wicked doctrine, true holinesse, and the right worship of God: Albeeit I thinke that thei of whom Jude speaketh, were like to the Libertines of our time, as it wil more plainly appeare by the course of the texte. *God whiche is onely Lorde.* Certaine olde Copies haue, *Christe*, whiche is onely God and Lorde. And in deede in the second Epistle of Peter, there is onely mention of Christe, and there he is called Lorde. He meaneth that *Christe is denied*, when thei who

who were redeemed with his blood, doue againe embondage them selues to the deuill, and make voide, as muche as lieth in theim, that inestimable price. Therefore, that Christe maie retaine vs in his owne possession: let vs remember that he therefore died for vs, and rose againe, that he might rule ouer our life and death.

5 *I will put you in remembraunce, for as muche as you know this, how that after the Lorde had deliuered his people out of Egipt, he destroyed thē afterwardes whiche beleeued not.*

6 *And the Angels whiche kepte not their first estate, but left their owne habitatiō: he hath reserued in euerlasting chaines vnder darknesse, vnto the iudgement of the greate daie.*

7 *As Sodome and Gomorrha, and the Citees aboute them, whiche in like maner as thei did, commited, and followed straunge fleshe, are set forth for an example and endure the like vengeaunce of eternall fire.*

5 *To put in mynde.* He either excuseth for modestie sake, least he maie seeme to teache

teache theim, as rude people of thynges, whiche thei knowe not: or in deede (which liketh me better) for the more vehemencie, he testifieth that he dooeth not bryng them any thing, which thei had not heard of before: To the ende that that whiche he was to speake, might haue the more credite and aucthoritie. He saieth, I onelie bryng to your remembraunce those thynges, whiche you haue learned alredy. But as he dooeth attribute vnto theim knowledge, to the ende thei maie bee the more watchfull to take heede: So leaste thei might thinke the labour, whiche he vndertooke towardes them to bee needelesse, he saieth thei haue neede of admonitions.

For this is not onely the vse of the worde of God, that wee maie learne those thynges, whiche wee were neuer taught, but also that it maie stirre vs vp to meditate earnestly those thynges, whiche wee knowe alreadie, and maie not suffer vs to bee drousie in fruitlesse knowledge. And this is the effecte, that after we are called of God, wee must not scarcely boste of his grace: but rather walke carefullie in his

feare.

feare. Because if any doe mocke God after this sorte, the contempte of his glorie shall not goe in vaine. He sheweth this by three examples. For firste he calleth to minde the punishement, whiche God executed vpon the vnbeleeuers, whom beyng redeemed by his power, he had chosen to be his people. Almoste the like comparison is in Paule, in his first to the *Corinthes*, the tenth Chapter. The effect is: Those whom God had adorned with greatest benefites, whom he had aduaunced into the same degree of honour, whiche he vouchsaueth vs at this date, he afterwardes seuerely punished.

Therefore, thei in vaine boaste of the grace of God, who soeuer do not answere vnto his callyng. The name of *People* is honourably taken for an holie and chosen Nation. As if he should haue saied, that it did not profite them that thei were taken into the Couenaunt by a singuler Priueledge. When he calleth them vnbeleuers, he noteth the fountaine of all euilles. For from thence, saieth *Moises*, did proceede all their sinnes, that thei did not yeelde them

themselues to bee guided by the woyde of God. For where the obedience of faithe is it is together of necessitie, that there remaine obedience towardes God, in euery part of this life.

6 *If not the Angels.* An argument from the moye to the lesse. For the condition of Angels was of moye accompt then ours: and yet God punished that fallyng awaie, for a moste horrible example. Therefore, he will not spare our vnfaithfulnesse, if we fall awaie from the grace, wherevnto he hath called vs. In deede this punishment, whiche was laied vppon the Citizens of heauen and suche excellent Ministers of God, ought to be daiely conuersant before our eyes: least at any tyme we bee carried into the contempt of the grace of GOD, from whence wee violently fall headlong into destruction: αρχη in this place, aptly bee taken as well for the beginnyng, as for cheefte. For Jude noteth that they were therfore punished, because despising the goodnesse of God they fell from their first callyng. And the Expositon followeth immediatly, when he saieth that they

left their first habitation. For no other waies then vseth to bee doen with runnaway souldiers, thei left their place wherein thei were set. The greeuousnesse of the punishment is also to bee marked, whiche the Apostle sheweth. Not onely free spirites, but heauenly Principalities, are now held bounde in perpetuall chaines. Thei did not onely enioye the glorious light of God, but his brightnesse did shine in them, that from thence as it were, he might powre out hymself, as by beames into all partes of the world: Now thei are plunged vnder darkenesse. Further, wee are not to imagine a place wherein the Deuilles are shut. For the Apostle meant to teach plainly, how miserable their condition is, since by their fallyng awaie, thei are depriued of their dignitie. For whether soeuer thei goe, thei drawe their chaines with them, and remain ouerwhelmed in their darkenesse. In the meane tyme, their extreme punishment is deferred, vnto the greate daie.

7 *As Sodome and Gomorrha.* This example is more generall. For he sheweth that

chat God (no sorte of men excepted) did indifferently execute punishment vppon all the wicked. And Jude himself doeth after make mention, that the burnyng wherewith the fiue Cities perished, was a figure of eternall fire. Therefore God did then appoinct an excellent instruction, whiche might keepe men in feare to the worldes ende. Wherevpon it commeth that there is so often mention thereof in the Scriptures. Yea, so often as the Prophet would set forth some notable and fearfull iudgement of God, setting it forthe vnder the figure of fire and Brimstone, thei allude to the destructiõ of Sodom and Gomorrha. Wherefore, Jude doth not without cause implie a terror to all worldes, by settyng before them suche a spectacle. When he saith, that *the neighbor Cities went a whoryng in like maner with them*, I referre not this to the Israelites and Angels, but mutually to Sodom and Gomorrha. Neither doeth it hinder, that thei pronounce τοὺτοις, these, is the Masculine gender. For Jude rather had regarde to the Inhabitaunts then to the places.

To followe straunge flesh. He hath put, for to be violently carried vnto monstrous lustes. For wee knowe that the Sodomites not content with a common libertie of vncleannesse, were defiled with more execrable and prepostorous filthinesse. It is to be noted, that he maketh them subiect vnto eternall fire. For hence we gather that that fearefull spectacle whiche *Moises* describeth, was onely the image of a greater punishment.

8 *Likewise, these deluded with dreames, doe in deede defile the flesh and despise gouernment, and speake euill of them that be in authoritie.*

9 *But Michaell the Archangell, when striuyng in iudgement, he disputed about the bodie of Moises, durst not blame hym with cursed speaking, but saicth. The Lorde rebuke thee.*

10 *But these speake euill of those thinges which thei know not. But what soeuer thynges thei knowe naturally, thei knowe as brute Beastes, in them thei are corrupted.*

Likewise

Likewise these &c. This Similitude 8
is not to bee precisely vrged, as if he cõpared those, of whom he speaketh to the Sodomites, or to ỹ Angels whiche left their saite, or to the vnbeleeuyng people, in all thynges. He onely sheweth, that thei are vassalles of wrathe ordained to destruction: and that thei can not escape the hande of God, but that in his tyme he will set the like example vppon them. For his purpose is, to withdrawe the godlie, least thei intangle them selues in their fellowship. Further, he beginneth in this place more clearely to describe these deceiuers. And first he saieth, thei doe as it were in dreaming defile their flesh, by which wordes he noteth, a sottishe shamelesnesse: as if he should haue saied, that thei are giuen ouer to all vncleannesse, whiche the very worste did abhorre, except drowsinesse did take from them all shame and feelyng. The speeche therefore is Metaphorical, whereby he noteth that thei are so blockishe, that thei giue ouer them selues to all filthinesse without any shame. But ỹ *Antitheſis* is to bee marked, when he saieth,

thei defile the flesh, that is, that which hath lesse excellencie, thei dishonest: and yet despise as ignominious, that whiche doeth most excell amongst men. By this second member it appeareth that thei were outragious men, which sought to be without gouernment, that beeyng freed from the feare of lawe, thei might sinne more freely. And these two are mostly alwaies ioyned together, that thei that are let loose to wickednesse, together desire that all order were abolished. Further, albeit this was their drift, to plaie the wilde Coltes without yoke, yet it appeareth by Judes woordes, that thei vsed to speake leudly and contemptuously of those that were in authoritie. As at this daie phantasticall fellowes doe not onely grinde their teeth, that thei are restrained by the authoritie of Gouerners: but thei furiously wrastle against all gouernment: thei crie, that the right of the swoorde is prophane and contrarie to godlinesse. Finally, thei proudly abandon out of the Churche of GOD Kynges and all Magistrates. He calleth *Dignities*, degrees endewed with excellencie, and thei

that

that excell in honour.

9 *But Michaell the Archangell.* Peter comprehēdeth this argument more neefly, & in generall, that the Angels whiche farre exceade men, yet dare not giue railyng sentence. Further, because thei haue thought that this Historie, is taken out of an *Apocriphall* booke, thence it is that the Epistle should bee of lesse accompte. But seeyng the Jewes had many thynges by the Traditions of the Fathers, I see nothyng to bee absurde, if we saie, that Jude reported that, whiche was deliuered by hande many yeres before.

I knowe in deede, that many foolishe thinges haue been receiued vnder this pretence, as the Papistes at this daie recken in this accompte, euery senceleſſe dotage of the Monkes. But this doeth not lette, but that thei had certaine historyes whiche were not witten. This is out of controuersie, that Moses was buried of GOD, that is, that his buriall was hid by the assured Counsell of God. And it is not vnknowne to any, why his place of buriall was hidd, that is, leaſte the Jewes should

drawe his bodie into an occasion of superstition. What maruel then, if Sathan endeuour to bryng to light, the bodie of the Prophet, that was kept secret by the will of God: But the Angels withstoode it, as their ministerie is alwaies at hande with God. And in deede we see, that almoste in all worldes, Sathan hath vsed this deuise, that the bodies of the seruauntes of God might be Idolls to so many foolishe men.

Wherfore, for this testimony, although it be not found in Scripture, this Epistle ought not to be called into doubt. Whereas Michaell alone is alleadged to dispute with Sathan, it is no newe thyng. Wee knowe that the thousandes of Angels are alwaies at hand to serue the Lorde: but he applieth with choice to the performaunce of thynges, this or that, as it pleaseth him.

That whiche Jude reporteth that Michaell spake, is also had in *Zacharie. 3. 1.* God rebuke thee or represse thee, Sathan. It is, as thei call it, a comparison of the more and ꝑ lesse. Michaell durst not more bitterly curse Sathan, who yet was a reprobate

prouate and damned, then that he might commit hym to God to be suppressed. But these feare not, to speake euill of (with extreme reproches) the powers whom God adorneth with singuler honour.

10 *Whiche thei knowe not.* He signifieth that thei sauour nothyng but that whiche is grosse and beastly: and therefore not to perceiue what is worthy of honor: yet that thei are so impudently mad, that thei feare not to condemne those thynges whiche are beyonde their capacitie. Againe, that thei are toyled in an other euill, that when after the maner of beasts thei runne headlong to those thynges whiche offer them selues to the outwarde senses, thei keepe no modestie in them: but thei doe vtterly plunge them selues, no other waies then the Swine tumbleth hymself into the filthinesse of mire.

The Aduerbe naturally, is set against reason and iudgement. For the only force of nature rageth in brute beastes: but reason ought to guide mē, and to bridle their affections.

11 *Woe bee vnto them: for thei haue fol-*

lowed the waie of Caine: and are cast awaie by the deceipt of Balaams wages, and haue perished in the gainsaiyng of Core.

12 These are blottes in your loue feastes, feastyng emong them selues, and feedyng them selues without feare, cloudes without water, caried aboute of windes: corrupt trees without fruite, twise deade, and plucked vp by the rootes.

13 Raging Waues of the Sea, fomyng out their owne shame: thei are wandring Starres, to whom is reserued the blackenesse of darkenesse for euer.

11 VVOe be vnto them. It is maruell why he doeth so sharplie inueigh against them, seeyng he had saied of late, that an Aungell had not libertie, to giue railyng sentence against Sathan hym self. But his purpose was to sette doune a generall rule: He onely sheweth heerby by *Michaels* example, how intollerable the rage of these fellowes is, whilest thei peeuishely raile vpon that whiche God dooeth honour. It was in deede lawfull for *Michael*,

chael, to thunder vppon Sathan with extreame cursyng. And wee see how vehemently the Prophetes vse sometymes enueigh against the wicked. But seeyng *Michael* abstaineth from extreame sharpnesse, otherwaies lawfull, how outrageous is it to keepe no meane agamste the Creatures whiche excell in glorie? But when he vseth pronounce vpon theim, he doeth not so muche wishe euill vnto them, as premonishe, what ende thei shall haue.

And that he doeth, least thei might carry any with theim to destruction vnawares. He saieth thei are the followers of Cain, who beeyng vnkinde to God, peruertyng his worshippe with an euill and a wicked harte, did bereaue hym self of the birtheright. He saieth thei were deceiued with rewarde as Balaam, because thei corrupt the doctrine of godlinesse for filthie lucre sake. But the Metaphor whiche he vseth, expresseth somewhat more. He saieth *thei are caste awaie:* That is, because their intemperatnesse is cast awaie, as water that is spilte. Thirdlie he saieth, that thei followe the gainsaiyng of Chore: Because

thei

thei trouble the good estate of the church.
12 *Blottes in your louefeastes.* Thei which read, emongst your Charities, doe not, in my iudgement expresse the naturall meanyng sufficiently. For he calleth αγαπας Feastes, whiche were vsed emongest the godlie, for to testifie their godlie vnitie. He saieth that suche bankettes are defiled of vncleane men, whiche dissolutely aftercramme themselues. For there was great sparyng and moderatiõ. It was not therfore meete, that raueners should bee admitted thether, whiche afterwarde should intemperatlie cramme their paunche otherwhere. Many copies haue bãkettyng together with you. Whiche readyng if it bee better liked, the sense shalbe, that thei were not a reproche, but greeuous and troublesome, as, thei that should without feare stuffe their Bellies, of the common charges of the Churche.

Peter saieth somewhat otherwaies, who writeth that thei are fedde in errour, and that thei eate together with the companie of the faithfull. As if he should haue saied, that thei doe vnaduisedly, who nourishe

rilhe luche daungerous Serpentes: And that thei are twise fooles, whiche pamper their excelliue riot.

And at this daie, I would God there were more iudgement in some good men, who while thei delite to bee too fauourable towardes the wicked, bryng greate hurte to the whole Churche.

Cloudes without water. The twoo similitudes whiche are in Peter, yet to one ende he knitteth into one. For, eche nippeth the boasting. Because these varletts, albeit thei promise many thinges, yet thei are barraine, and emptie within. As the Cloudes that are driuen with the stormes giue hope of raine, but by and by thei wast to nothyng. Peter addeth a similitude of a drie and emptie Fountaine. And Jude coupleth diuers Metaphors to one ende; that *Corrupt trees:* as at gatheryng tyme the strength of trees decreaseth: After he calleth them *Trees without fruite, plucked vp by the rootes, twise dead.* As if he should haue said, there is no iuyce within, how soeuer the leaues appeare.

13 *Rageyng waues of the Sea.* Jt maie more

more plainely bee gathered by the wordes of Peter, why this was added: that is, because being puffed vp with pride, thei bluster out or rather spue out proude wordes in a lofty stile. In the meane tyme thei do so hyng nothyng that is spirituall, that thei rather cast men doune to bee as voyde of feelyng as bryte beastes. Suche, as is alreadie said, are at this daie those phantasticall fellowes, who tearme them selues Libertines. Thou wouldest saie thei dor nothyng but thunder. For despising the common order of speeche, thei feigne vnto themselues I wot not what straunge farr fetched forme of vtteraunce. After thei haue seemed to lift their Disciples aboue the Skies, thei sodainly fall into beastly errors. For thei imagine that that is the state of innocencie. When there is no difference betweene that which is filthie and cleane. Thei imagine that that is a spirituall life, while feare beyng set a parte, euery one doeth securely flatter hymself: that we become Gods, because God wholly taketh our spirites departyng out of our bodies. For whiche cause the simplicitie

citie of the Scripture, is with more diligence and reuerence to be esteemed, least more finely plaiyng the Philosophers thē is conuenient, wee approache not to Heauen, but rather bee ouerwhelmed in manifolde incomberaunces. He therefore calleth thē *wandryng Starres*, because thei dazle ẏ eyes with a vanishyng shew of light.

14 *And Enoch the seuenth from Adam did before Propheſie of them, saiyng: Behold the Lorde commeth with thousandes of his Saincte.*

15 *That he might giue Iudgement against all men, and might rebuke al the vngodly amōg them, of all their wicked deedes, which thei haue vngodly committed, and of all their cruel speakinges, which wicked men haue spoken against God.*

16 *These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their owne lusts: and their mouth speaketh proude thynges, hauyng mens persons in admiration for aduauntage.*

AND *before*. I thinke rather that this Propheſie was not witten, then taken 14

ken out of the *Apochripha* Bookes. For it maie bee that thei of olde tyme did commende this saiyng to their posteritie, as a thing worthie the remembryng. If a man aske (seyng there bee many like saiynges euery where in the Scriptures) why he did not cite this testimonie written out of some one of the Prophets, the aunswere is readie: that he would repeate from the furthest antiquitie what the Spirite hath pronounced of them. And this is the meanyng of the wordes. For he saith by name *the seuenth from Adam*, that he maie commende the antiquitie of the Prophesie: namely, that it hath beene alreadie in the former worlde. And whereas I haue said, that this Prophesie was knowne vnto the Iewes by reporte: if any man thinke other waies I doe not striue: as neither of the Epistle also, whether it bee Judes, or some other mans. Onely I followe that whiche is likely in thynges doubtfull.

Behold the Lorde came. The tyme past is put for the tyme to come, after the maner of the Prophets. He saieth that he shal come with thousands of Sainctes: vnder

whiche

whiche wordes he noteth as wel the faithfull as the Angels. For both shall set forth the tribunall seate of Christ, when he shall come doune to iudge the worlde. He saith thousandes, euen as Daniell also 7.10. doeth saie millions of Angells: least that the multitude of the vngodly, should as a ragyng Sea carrie awaie the children of God, whileste thei thinke that it will come to passe that the Lorde will at length gather his together, of whiche parte dwellyng in heauen, is now hidden from our eyes, and parte lieth hidden vnder a great heape of chaffe. But the punishement that hangeth ouer the reprobate, ought to staie the electe in feare and watchfulnesse. He speaketh of deedes and wordes: because these corrupters did not onely muche hurt by their wicked life, but by their lewde and vncleane speech. And he calleth them hard speeches, for the shamelesse boldnesse wherewith beyng puffed vp, thei doe malepertly thrust in them selues.

16 *These are murmurers.* Because thei flatter them selues in wicked affections, thei are withall harde and frowarde, that

thei are neuer satisfied: hence it commeth that thei alwaies murmur and complaine, although good men doe beare themselues kindly towardes them. He nippeth their proude speakyng, because thei boast themselues proudly. But in the meane while he sheweth that thei are of a vile disposition: because thei slauishly abase themselues, for aduauntage. And this vneuen dealing is commonly seen in such varlets. Where there is no man whiche maie staie their Pride; or there is no respect whiche maie let it, their Pride is intollerable: thei chalenge any thing vnto themselues so imperiously. But thei vilely flatter those, whō thei flatter, or of whom thei hope for some gaine. He taketh persons, for the outward greatnesse or power.

17 *But ye beloued remember the wordes which were spoken before by the Apostles of our Lorde Iesus Christ: to wit,*

18 *That thei told you, that ther should be mockers in the last tyme, whiche should walk after the lustes of their owne vngodlinesse.*

19 *These*

19 *These are thei which seperate themselues, fleshly, not hauyng the Spirit.*

BVt ye. Now he setteth the warnynges of the Apostles whiche were fresho in memorie, after the auncient Prophesie. This worde, μνήσθητε, that is remember, it maketh no greate matter, whether you reade it in the Indicatiue moode, or in the Imperatiue moode. For the sence remaineth one, that thei which are armed, ought not to bee astonished, with the Prophesie, whiche he citeth. He vnderstandeth the last tyme, wherein the state of the Church beyng renued, doeth receiue a setled condition to the ende of the worlde. And it began from the first comming of Christ. He calleth them Mockers after the maner of the Scripture, whiche beeyng dronken with a wicked and prophane contempt of God, doe breake out into a beastly despising of his power: so that no Religiō doth keepe them any more in their duetie: because no feare of the iudgement to come, no hope of eternall life doeth stick in their myndes. As now a daies the worlde doeth euery where swarme with hauing no God 17

but their owne bellie Epicures which despise God, who quite castyng a side all reuerence, do furiously scoffe the whole doctrine of godlinesse as a tale.

19 *Whiche seperate.* Many Greeke Copies haue a Participle absolute. Others add ἑαυτοὺς: but almost in the same sence. For he vnderstandeth that thei make a departure from the Church, because thei can not beare the yoke of discipline, as whiche beyng giuen to the flesh, doe abhorre a spirituall life. The flesh here is set against the Spirite, that is, the grace of regeneration: and therefore it doeth signifie an euill disposition, suche as is in men not yet borne a newe. For in this nature whiche goeth out of kinde, whiche we draw from Adam, is nothing but a grosse and earthly thyng: that no parte of vs doeth aspire vnto God, till we be renued with his spirite.

20 *But ye, beloued, edifiyng your selues in your moste holy faithe, praiyng in the holy Ghost.*

21 *Keepe your selues in the loue of God, looking for the mercie of our Lorde Iesus Christ vnto eternall life.*

22 And

22 *And haue mercie on some, putting*
difference:
23 *And others saue through feare, pul-*
lyng them out of the fire, hatyng al-
so the garment spotted by the flesh.
24 *Now to hym that is able to keepe*
you free from sinne, and to present
you faultlesse before the presence of
his glorie with ioye,
25 *To God onely wise our Sauiour bee*
glorie, and maiestie, and dominion,
and power, now, and for euer, amen.

But ye &c. He sheweth the waie where- 20
by thei may ouerturne all the engines of Sathan, to wit, hauyng loue so ioyned with faith, as though thei did watche in a Holde vntill the commyng of Christ. But as he is much and vsuall in borowed speeches, so here also he hath his maner of speeche whiche must heedfully bee noted. He commaundeth in the first place that thei builde themselues in faithe. Whereby he signifieth that the foundation of faith must be helde fast: but that the first instruction is not sufficient vnlesse thei striue daily to goe forwarde, whiche haue alreadie laied

the foundation in a right faith. He calleth their faithe moste holy, that thei maie rest soundly vppon it, and leanyng vnto the strength thereof, maie neuer wauer. But for as muche as the whole perfection of man doeth consist in faith, it seemeth to be an vnseemely thyng that he biddeth to builde an other buildyng, as though faith did onely begin a man. The Apostle aunswereth this question, when he addeth by and by, that men are builded vpon faithe, loue being ioyned withall. Unleast it may be that some man had rather take it thus, that men are builded in faithe, so farre as thei profite therein. And truely they daily goyng forwarde in faithe, doe cause that it riseth into a full buildyng. By this meanes the Apostle would teach, that we must growe in faithe, that wee must bee earnest in praier, and that wee must holde fast our callyng in loue.

Praying in the Spirite. This is the waie of continuance, if wee bee instructed with the power of God. Therefore, as often as wee speake of the constantnesse of faithe, we muste flie vnto praier. And because we commonly

commonly praie slaighlie, he addeth, *in the Spirite*: as if he should saie, that there is so greate slackneſſe, and so greate coldneſſe of our fleſhe, that none can praie a right, vnleſſe he bee stirred vp with the Spirite of God, that wee are so readie to mistruſte and fearfulneſſe, that no man dareth call God Father, except the same Spirite doe teache hym. For, frō hence commeth carefulneſſe, hence heate and earneſtneſſe, hēce chearfulneſſe, hence hope of obtainyng, hence finally come those vnspeakable gronynges, of whiche Paule speaketh. Rom. 8. Therefore, Jude teacheth not without cause, that no man can praie as he ought, except the Spirite bee his guide.

21 *Keepe your selues in Loue.* He placeth Loue as the keeper and guide of our life: not that he maie set it against the grace of God, but because this is the right course of our callyng, if we goe forward in Loue. And because many thynges doe intice vs to backsliding, that it is hard to keepe our selues sounde vnto God vnto the ende, he recalleth the faithfull vnto the laste daie. For the verie waityng for that daie, ought

to staie vs vp, that wee neuer fainte. Otherwaies wee muste needes quaile euerie moment.

And it is to bee noted, that he will not haue vs to hope for eternall life, but from the mercie of Christe. For, he shall so bee our Iudge, that he holdeth the free benefite of Redemption, purchased by hym, as a rule to iudge by.

22 *And haue compassion on some*. He ioyneth an other exhortation, how the faithfull ought to behaue them selues in correctyng their brethren: that thei maie bryng them vnto the Lorde.

And he teacheth that thei are diuerslie to bee dealt with, to wit, euery manne, accordyng to his disposition. For, towardes the gentle, and suche as are willyng to be taught, wee must vse gentlenesse. Others are more hard: therefore, to be brought vnder with feare. This is the puttyng of a difference whiche he spake of. The Participle διακρινόμενοι, that is puttyng difference, I knowe not why *Erasmus* should rather chuse to translate it Passiuelie, seyng it is doubtfull: and the Actiue signification,

fication, doeth farre better agree with the text. Therefore the somme is, that, if wee will prouide for the safetie of them that do fall. We must consider the inclination of euery manne: that thei whiche are gentle and tractable, bee gently called backe into the waie, as worthie of compassion: but if any be stubberne, let hym bee corrected more sharpely. And because sharpenesse is almoste hurtfull, he excuseth it by the necessitie, because thei cannot otherwaies bee preserued, whiche doee not followe good counsailes of their owne accorde. Further, he vseth an excellent borowed speeche. For, where there is no daunger of burnyng, wee doubte not with violence to pull hym, whom we desire to haue safe: neither in deede were it inough to becken with their finger, or gentely to reache out the hande. So also their safetie is to bee prouided for, whiche would not come vnto God, vnleast thei were hardly drawne.

The old interpretation doeth farre differ: whiche readyng is yet found in many Greeke copies. Reproue them that are iudged, saith the old interpreter. But that

former sence dooeth better agree: and in my iudgemente it is true and naturall. The woorde to *keepe*, is translated vnto menne: not that thei are authours of safetie, but Ministers.

23 *Hatyng*. This place, whiche otherwaies dooeth seeme darcke, shall haue no hardnesse, the boorowed speeche beyng wel expounded. He willeth that the faithfull doe not onely take heede of the touchyng of vices: But that no infection doe fasten vpon them, he teacheth that whatsoeuer is ucre and alied, be auoided. As if we speake of inchastitie, wee will saie that all prouocations to luste muste bee taken awaie. That shalbee yet made moore plaine, if the speeche bee made full: to wit, that we hate not onely the fleshe, but the garmēt which is defiled with the touching of it. For this note μαλι *i.* and, serueth to amplification. Therefoore, he dooeth not so muche permitt euill to bee nourished by sufferaunce, that rather he bideth all preparations, and all additions as thei call them, to be cutte of.

24 *And to hym that is able to keepe.* He shutteth vp his Epistle, with the praise

of

of God: in whiche he sheweth that our exhortations can dooe nothyng, neither our endeuours, except the effecte proceede frō the power of God.

Some copies haue (*Them*) whiche readyng if wee receiue, the sence shalbee, in deede it is your parte to endeuour, that thei maie be safe: but it pertaineth to God onely to performe the same. Yet the other readyng pleaseth me better: in whiche also there is an alludyng vnto the former sentence. For after that he hath exhorted the faithfull, to saue that whiche was lost: to the ende that thei might knowe, that al endeuours will be to none effecte, excepte God woorke: He doeth in deede witnesse that thei can not otherwise bee saued, then by the power of God. Albeeit in this laste parte, there is an other Uerbe, that is to saie, Φυλαξαι, whiche soundeth to keepe. So he should haue respect to that former member, where he saied,

Saue, or Keepe your
selues.

FINIS.

An Epistle of M. Ihon Caluin, containyng diuers necessarie poinctes of knowledge tendyng to constancie in the truthe in the tyme of affliction: written to a Freend.

Epist. 364.

Caluin. N. S. D.

To certaine controuersies of godly Bretheren.

THE calamitie of ỳ Church N. doeth not a little greeue vs: but because God doeth now seeme to loose the races of Sathan and the wicked, that he maie exercize those that bee his, we must pacientlie beare our estate. In the meane tyme he is to be intreated, that for his mercies sake he will spare ỳ weakenesse of his tender and little flocke. But who so thinketh that it goeth miserablie with

with the Churche, so often as it is assailed with the furie or cruell violence of enemies, doe not yet knowe the very ground of Christiã warfare. Hence is that doubtfulnesse that hath crept into the myndes of many, and now doeth possesse them. Whether it bee lawfull for the godlie to haue secrete meetynges, and in the night. For wee see that iudgement is cheefly giuen by the successe, then the whiche, there is nothing more out of order. Of late whẽ without daunger thei might come together, thei also thought that without all controuersie their obedience was acceptable to God: now when trouble is sprong vp, doe thei dispute whether thei suffer punishment for their rashnesse? By this meanes will shortly be condemned the confession of faithe, whiche doeth more kindle the rage of the wicked. Finally, according to these Iudgers it will not be good to followe Christ, except in prosperitie. Paule did not without cause, place the scoffings of Israell in the highest degree of persecution: because therein is more daunger by deriding, and reproches, then by armed crueltie. Galat. 4. 29.

crueltie. If the wicked see vs pressed with aduersitie, thei triumph at our afflictions. Here if our cõstancie doth begin to quaile, thei hurt more greeuously with their wordes then with swonde. But that saiyng of Paule was to be held: because we trust in the liuing God, wee must not onely suffer persecution, but slaunders. Let vs therefore call to remembraunce the example of Christ, whom Sathan laboured to wound with his venemous Darte. He trusted in God, let hym deliuer hym if he will, least we stumble so oft as we seeme to be giuen vnto the desire of the enemies. But if at the first pushe the Brethren be either feared or disquieted, it is your duetie to staie them vp, least thei fall doune, or also to raise them vp, that thei maie againe recouer their strength: and not therfore to faile from their godlie endeuour, because it gaue the wicked an occasion to be cruell. For if the matter be weighed by it self, thr aunswere will be plaine, that their priuate and secrete meetynges, were not laied to the Apostles charge for a fault. The malicious enemies might then also obiect,

that

that men and women could not come to-gether in the night and secretly without suspition. And there is no doubte but thei were burdened with many slaunders: and when a Garison of Souldiers kept watch at Jerusalem, this might seeme to be contrary to the publique peace. And yet they ceased not for all that. We see that when Peter was taken prisoner, thei were gathered together in the house of a widowe. Neither is it needefull here to gather examples, because it is knowne to haue been in daiely vse with them: as Histories witnesse, that the godly Martirs haue had caues for their Churches. All be it this was subiect to no smal reproof, that thei might bee suspected either of theft, or of some other wickednesse: yet because necessitie did so enforce, thei despised with valiaunt myndes the reproches whiche thei knewe to be commonly spread. So now our bretheren are armed with a moste excellent defence, if Magistrates will suffer them freely and openly to call vppon the name of God, that thei will then gladly come abroade, nor will thei doe any thyng in secrete: Act. 12. 12.

crete: but because by their tyrannie thei are forbid, yet that thei follow that meane whiche is moste farre from tumulte. The same is to bee thought of Matrimonie, whose blessyng (as thei call it) in the Papacie is meere prophanation. And yet in respect of politicall order, it can not be called a secrete Mariage, whereof there is a Regester kept. But that ỹ holinesse thereof should be polluted and defiled with superstitions, is by no meanes to be suffred. All be it night Burialles are not without cause condemned by the Lawes: yet in vaine doe thei cloake their delicatenesse, who in the Burialles of their freends, do wrapp and intangle them selues with old Sacriledges. The same reason ought to holde in Baptisme. For all be it there bee before them a moste present daunger, yet will not that therefore be lawfull, whiche God doeth manifestly forbid. We knowe that in the Papacie Baptisme is corrupted with many defilynges, and is almoste adulterated. If no feare hinder, it wil easily bee agreed vnto among all the godlie, that it is not lawfull for Fathers to offer

their

their childrē to a defiled Baptisme. Therfore, to take an excuse by the daunger is too friuolous, as if the matter it self should thereby chaunge the nature thereof. For wee knowe that the testimonie of Godlinesse is more worth before God, then that it ought to giue place either to threatninges, or terrors, at the least where feare doeth vrge vs to dissimulation, whiche is a secrete approuing of that which is euill. Wherefore, as for charities sake wee lament together with our Brethren: so it is not in our power to free them from the insoluble lawe of God, whiche by no meanes maie bee broken. And if the Jewishe women in tymes past did not feare in *Egipt*, to deliuer the children of other men from the swoorde of *Pharao*, to put their owne liues into daunger, it is foule for parentes to bee amazed with feare, that so muche as in them lieth, thei defile the soules of their children. These thynges I haue breefly written to you accordyng to the iudgement of our companie, good sir, and right reuerende Brother, the Lorde guide you alwaies with his Spirit, blesse

Exod. 1. 17.

your holy labours, and keepe you in safetie with the Churche committed to your charge. My fellowe labourers also doe hartely salute you. At Geneua.

FINIS.